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ABSTRACT

Although designed specifically for citizen groups involved with public schools in Salem (Oregon), this handbook contains suggestions relevant to other citizen advisory groups. The primary purpose of the handbook is to assist such groups in being able to work together effectively. A collection of many short outlines, checklists, and articles drawn from various sources is organized in five sections: general information on Salem Public Schools, citizen advisory group organization and operation, group dynamics, group leadership, and useful resources and a bibliography. (Author/MLF)

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Working Together

A Handbook for Citizen Advisory Groups

SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Salem, Oregon

William M. Kendrick
Superintendent

EA 014 300

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P. O. Box 12024 • Salem, Oregon 97309
ADMINISTRATION CENTER • 1309 Ferry Street SE

WILLIAM M. KENDRICK, Superintendent (503) 399-3001

September, 1981

Dear Citizen Advisory Committee Leaders:

It is an honor to introduce you to Working Together: A Handbook For Citizen Advisory Groups. I am very pleased that you are volunteering your time and energy to help improve the Salem Public Schools.

Citizen involvement in this school district has grown and matured during the last few years. Citizen participation is one key to a strong, healthy school district. With your involvement and support, the School Board and staff are able to address the many complex issues facing this school district.

Citizen involvement in educational decision-making, especially at the local level, will become more critical to our success. In order for citizen participation to be effective, it requires several major elements: first, a dedicated group of citizens; second, a school district committed to citizen participation; and finally, local and district-wide support of citizen advisory committees. The latter component is one reason for this handbook.

This handbook is intended to provide citizen advisory committees with information, processes, and skills to become more effective in advising the School Board and administration on educational issues. It is designed as a working handbook to aid your group in becoming more effective.

Again, I applaud your willingness to serve this school district. Our common mission is to provide the best quality educational program for Salem's 23,500 students. Together, we can develop a home, school, and community partnership for educating our children and youth.

Good luck with your involvement in citizen advisory committees. If I can be of assistance to your group, please feel free to call me at 399-3001.

Sincerely,

William M Kendrick

WILLIAM M. KENDRICK
Superintendent

Salem School District 24J complies with provisions of the various civil rights laws, such as the Fair Employment Practices Act, Title IX Regulations, and section 504 of PL 89.313 in employment and educational programs and activities.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many excellent materials on citizen advisory groups and citizen participation were reviewed in compiling this handbook. The producers of this handbook would like to acknowledge the following organizations and individuals whose materials were used:

Conrad Powell, Carl Carpenter, Lynne Cooper, *School Advisory Council Activity Guides,* University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina.

Carol Hoge, *A Handbook for Trainers of Policy Councils and Other Decision-Making Groups,* Humanics Press.

Glenn Klein, Leadership Development Specialist, Extension Service, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon.

Mark Millemann, Management and Organizational Development Consultant, Beaverton, Oregon.

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, Oregon.

Susan Paddock, Greg Druian, Susan Sayers, *Process Facilitation Manual for Community Education Coordinators,* Northwest Community Education Development Center, Eugene, Oregon, and Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C.

Group Work Skills – The How To's, Utah State Office of Education, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1980.

In addition, there are several Salem School District personnel who have contributed substantially to the production of this handbook:

Anita Jackson typeset the materials compiled for the handbook.

Eleanor Love produced the graphic illustrations for the handbook.

Bill Jackson and his staff managed the printing of the handbook.

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INTRODUCTION

Citizen advisory groups play a very important role in guiding the operation of Salem Public Schools. In order for them to be effective, though, in this decision-making process, the citizens involved need to be able to work effectively together in a group, to understand the issues confronting them, and to be familiar with the institution that deals with these issues.

The primary purpose of this handbook is to assist citizen advisory groups of the Salem School District in meeting the first need of the three mentioned above—to be able to work effectively together in a group. The second need, to understand the issues, should be met during the course of a person's involvement with a citizen advisory group. The third need, to become familiar with the school system, is partially met through this handbook; but, again, a person's involvement with a given citizen advisory group will give him or her much more familiarity with the workings of the district.

This handbook is designed to be used as a reference by Salem School District citizen advisory group leaders, other members and staff, to provide them with general information and helpful tips on the operation of their group. The handbook contains five sections:

A. General information on Salem Public Schools

B. Citizen Advisory Group Organization and Operation

C. Group Dynamics

D. Group Leadership

E. Useful Resources and Bibliography

The reader will find that the handbook consists of a collection of many short outlines, checklists, and articles drawn from various sources. With this type of organization, most of the entries lend themselves to use on their own and may be conveniently extracted and duplicated.

This booklet was developed by staff in the Community Relations Department of Salem Public Schools, including:

Greg Hansen
Franclyn Heinecke
Nadine Johnson
Alan Kirk
William Liebertz
Patti O'Rielly

Salem School District 24J complies with provisions of the various civil rights laws, such as the Fair Employment Practices Act, Title IX Regulations, and section 504 of PL 89.313 in employment and educational programs and activities.

SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 24J . . .

philosophy

We believe that each student:

. . should be assisted to believe in himself or herself and strive to do his or her best.

. . is unique; therefore, each should be listened to.

. . varies in the time needed to reach his or her capability.

. . should exhibit mutual respect for all human beings.

. . should be given the opportunity to view different careers by working or observing in actual situations.

. . should communicate intelligently in business and personal matters.

. . should be responsible for one's own actions, both to oneself and to society.

We believe that the schools:

. . should strive to work with each individual student to achieve his or her maximum capability.

. . should encourage the student to be honest and self-disciplined.

. . should help each student possess the fundamentals of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

. . should provide an effective physical fitness and health education program which is available to each student.

. . should develop school assignments which reflect individual student differences.

. . should respect each student's personal beliefs and feelings.

. . should strive to make early identification and provide appropriate answers to special problems of students.

. . should strive to make counseling services available at all times, not just for those who have problems, but for those who want to talk with someone.

. . should assist all students to learn to live with equality and dignity in a family environment.

. . should have a shared responsibility for students' understanding of the rapid changes taking place in the world.

. . should assist students in learning the role of an informed consumer.

. . should preserve and strengthen our American heritage through the emphasis of ideals and principles of Democracy.

We further believe that the development of the whole individual is not accomplished by the school alone. The home and community must contribute to student growth by establishing attitudes which stimulate learning. The success of the student is therefore dependent upon the student, the school, the home, and the community.

Salem Public Schools
District 24J

POLICY STATEMENT

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

1. It is the policy of the Board to make constructive use of citizen advisory committees such as the Community Relations Advisory Committee (CRAC), the Local School Advisory Committee (LSAC), the Local Community Schools Advisory Committee (LCSAC), and others as a way to involve the public in the decision-making process.

   a. These groups may provide information and make recommendations about educational matters that are of concern to them, but the Board has the responsibility for setting priorities and making policy.

   b. These groups are recognized as responsibly seeking to make independent contributions to the life of the community.

   c. These groups may work with non-school agencies toward the solution of school-oriented problems, recognizing that advisory committees are ultimately responsible to the School Board.

2. It is the policy of the Board that the administration secure input from these groups in an appropriate manner before matters affecting such groups are presented for policy decisions or action.

Adopted by the Salem School Board
September 26, 1972
Revised August 11, 1981

CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEES

While the School Board has final authority and responsibility for setting school district policies, citizen advisory committees are the necessary link between the school and the community on school-related issues. In fact, each school is required by the School Board to have a Local School Advisory Committee (LSAC).

The LSAC serves as the liaison for school and community concerns with the principals and School Board. With guidance from the Community Relations Advisory Committee (CRAC), LSACs should strive to include as many citizens as possible in school-community related matters.

There are many school issues in which citizens can be involved. The School Board has mandated citizen involvement in the district's discipline policy, budget, and school enrollment and growth. Other areas of involvement should be determined at the local school. Appropriate areas in which LSACs may consider involvement include, but are not limited to: curriculum development, teaching methods, traffic safety, building level budget expenses, and establishing the criteria for selecting personnel.

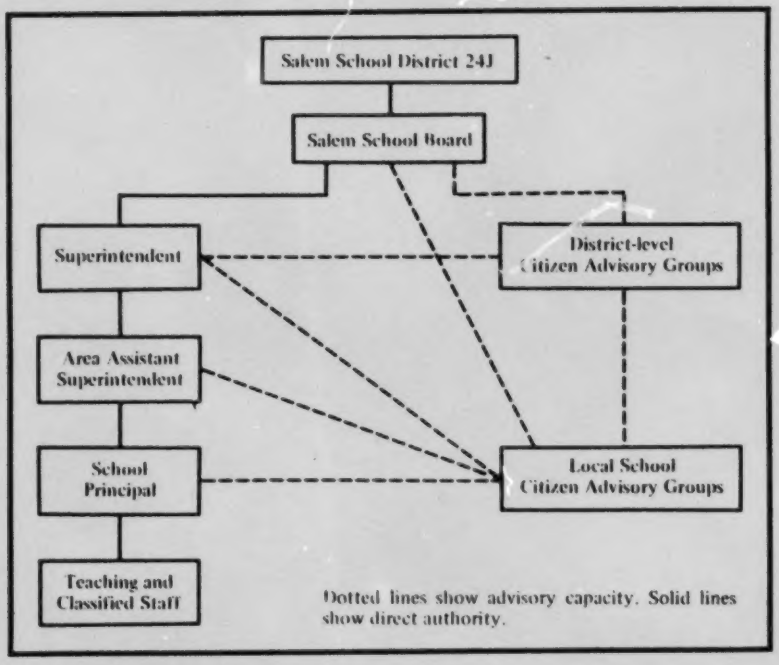
Inappropriate areas of citizen involvement at the local level are individual student discipline cases, family concerns, individual employee evaluations, and individual student records.

Local citizen advisory committees should deal with the building principal on local issues. When addressing an issue with broader implications, LSACs should go through the principal to the area assistant superintendent or to a district-level advisory committee. Finally, when a critical issue surfaces, the local committee should contact the Superintendent or School Board directly.

District-wide advisory groups should channel issues through the Superintendent and the School Board.

Ideally, all school-related concerns should be resolved at the earliest possible opportunity, but any citizen group is free to contact any other individual or group on any issue, if they so desire.

The chart below shows avenues available to local and district-wide advisory committees when addressing school-related issues:


Salem School District 24J
Salem School Board
Superintendent
District-level Citizen Advisory Groups
Area Assistant Superintendent
School Principal
Local School Citizen Advisory Groups
Teaching and Classified Staff
Dotted lines show advisory capacity. Solid lines show direct authority.

SALEM SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERSHIP

		ZONE	TERM EXPIRES
Mary Hoyt, Chairperson			
3275 Elderberry Drive S 97302	581-5066	4	6/30/83
Oregon Mental Health Division 97310	378-2193		
Joanne Stern, Vice-Chairperson			
2255 Eola Drive NW 97304	585-9828	1	6/30/84
Charles Foster			
4394 Harlan Drive NE 97303	390-1264	7	6/30/85
Chemeketa Community College 97309	399-5139		
James Havel			
1446 Jodelle Court N 97303	390-1007	6	6/30/83
Rm. 331 State Capitol Building 97310	378-5720		
Jeanne Large			
725 Tillman SE 97302	588-2259	3	6/30/85
Charles Sides			
2555 Hollywood Drive NE 97305	585-9208	5	6/30/84
3756 Portland Road NE 97303	399-1928		
Grace Thorp			
654 Illinois Avenue NE 97301	362-0200	2	6/30/82
161 High Street SE 97301	581-8007		
William G. Paulus, School District Attorney			
Suite 360, Old Garfield School Building,			
528 Cottage Street NE, 97301	581-1551		
3090 Pigeon Hollow Road S 97302	364-8926		

BOARD MEETINGS

Regular Meetings of the District School Board

Place: Administration Center, 1309 Ferry Street SE
Time: 7:00 p.m., Second and Fourth Tuesdays

The Board wants to hear the viewpoints and concerns of patrons of the Salem Public Schools. Any person may speak at a Board meeting by calling the Superintendent's Office in advance or signing the sheet at the speaker's table prior to the meeting. People who want to present written materials to the Board may do that by speaking with the Board Secretary.

In order to cover all the business that the Board must deal with at each meeting, the Board uses an agenda. Sometimes that requires the Board Chairperson to limit public communications in order to give every person time to speak.

In some cases, the Board needs to ask staff members to gather information about the issue that a patron is raising. In other cases, the Board may need to consider the issue and make a decision about it at a future meeting. In all cases, the Board will try to make as speedy a decision as possible.

IDEAS FOR MAKING YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUP MORE EFFECTIVE

I. Organization of your citizen advisory group

1. Encourage people to join your citizen group.
2. Organize the membership of your group in the spring of each school year for the following school year so that you will be able to function as a group by the first of September.
3. Keep your membership informed as to the role of your group, related citizen groups, the School Board, and the school administration.
4. Put a letter of introduction and explanation of the group purpose and functions in the packet of information for parents that the school sends to families at the beginning of the school year.
5. Keep informed about new programs and other changes in your school.
6. Develop subcommittees to deal with various neighborhood/school issues, needs, or programs.
7. Keep your district representative informed of your committee's activities.
8. Review school/community relations practices in your school and recommend any improvements you feel might be appropriate.
9. Cooperate with other citizen groups when addressing local issues and concerns.
10. Express your views, when appropriate, to city, county, and/or state officials and agencies, including the Oregon Legislature. If you take a stand on an issue, make it clear that you are speaking only for your citizen group and not for the School Board or school administration.

II. Citizen advisory group meetings

1. Conduct efficient, businesslike but informal meetings.
2. Work with the principal in preparing meeting agendas.
3. Meet regularly at times and places that are convenient for the public to attend.
4. Call citizen group members when they are absent from your meeting to update them.
5. Invite the Superintendent and other district-level administrators to attend one or more of your meetings. Include them on the program.
6. Invite teachers and other school staff to join your group.
7. Call parents individually and invite them to your meetings. You might invite a different group each month and give them an opportunity to be heard if they come. Interesting meetings are an incentive for attendance.
8. Invite the parent club president and other parent club officers to attend your meetings. Also attend their meetings.
9. Invite teachers to make curriculum presentations at your meetings. Publicize their appearance in advance and invite people to attend.
10. Invite your Board representative to attend your meetings and let people know that he/she will be there.
11. Hold an annual meeting for residents who are new in your school. Tell them about your group and the school, and make them feel welcome.

III. Citizen advisory group activities within the school and community

1. Introduce citizen group members at every formal school activity that involves parents and the public.
2. Be visible in and around your school. Use your imagination regarding ways to do it.
3. Visit classes in your school frequently.
4. Survey the public in your attendance area. Compile, report, and follow through on responses.
5. Conduct walking or bus tours of your school and/or neighborhood with local officials to show them unique aspects and/or needs of your community.
6. Encourage local residents to run for elected public offices such as City Council, School Board, etc.
7. Attend School Board meetings whenever possible.
8. Visit other school district facilities: Administration Center, Education Center, Transportation Center, Central Services, and/or other schools.
9. Attend your district-level group meetings whenever possible.
10. Attend a district Budget Committee meeting or two.
11. Sponsor or encourage others to sponsor neighborhood coffees to discuss school topics. Invite the principal, a Board member, or district administrator as appropriate.
12. Have lunch with students and/or staff periodically.
13. Schedule an annual recognition event for all school and neighborhood volunteers.

IV. Budget matters and educational programs

1. Study the budget information for your school, give input to the principal as the budget is prepared, and help explain the budget information to other interested persons in your school attendance area.
2. Share your concerns about the educational programs of your school with the building principal and work with him/her toward solutions of problems.
3. Be aware of safety provisions in your school attendance area and work toward the solution of any problems with your school principal, the administration, or public agencies which may be involved.

V. Newsletters

1. If your school does not have a newsletter, start one or encourage the Parent Club or principal to do so.
2. Have your school exchange newsletters with other schools so that you can share ideas.
3. Include reports of your activities in your local school newsletter.
4. Put your meeting times and agendas in the school newsletter each month.
5. List the names and phone numbers of your citizen group members in each school newsletter.

SIXTEEN DO'S AND DON'TS FOR CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUPS

Source: Unknown

DO

Expect the job of organizing an effective advisory group to take time. More time spent in the beginning will mean less time wasted in the end. Give the project a chance to grow. Give leadership a chance to emerge.

DON'T

Be in a hurry or rush others into accepting responsibility before they have a chance to find out how much is involved.

DO

Start with temporary officers—maybe as temporary as for just one meeting; perhaps a host and/or hostess, instead of a chairperson. Take turns keeping notes for the first few meetings. Provide ample opportunity for expression of all views.

DON'T

Try to elect a slate of permanent officers at the first meeting, or try to choose subjects for study before you know what subjects interest your community most.

DO

Give the Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools, and other school personnel an opportunity at the outset to suggest how you can be helpful. Invite them to join in your activities. If their cooperation is not immediately forthcoming, keep trying. Be sure they receive notices of all meeting dates. Remember that independence doesn't rule out interdependence.

DON'T

Fail continuously to seek cooperation from school administration. Don't forget that cooperation does not mean domination.

DO

Seek out for commendation areas in which your schools are setting an example for others, as well as areas in which there is room for improvement. Be a fact-finding group, not a fault-finding group.

DON'T

Harp, criticize irresponsibily, or involve personalities.

DO

Make membership represent your community. Include people whose interests represent education, business, labor, churches, organizations, youth, racial and national backgrounds, and all geographic areas. Keep meetings open to interested groups and persons. Build a cross-section membership big enough to do the job you outline for yourselves.

DON'T

Try to do a broad job with only a few chosen members.

DO

"Include the opposition in." Invite those who disagree with you to participate in the group. Try to get them to accept responsibility in the group.

DON'T

Be afraid of opposition or avoid those who disagree with you.

DO

Clearly define the purpose, policy, and scope of your group after the first few meetings. This can be amended later, if the interests of the group broaden.

DON'T

Tackle the job until you have all agreed on precisely what the job is.

DO

Choose your topics for study with reference to the preferences of the entire membership of the group.

DON'T

Have topics for study chosen by a small committee and foisted onto the rest of the group.

DO

Determine the number of officers needed, the number of subcommittees, etc., with reference to the scope of the job you carve out, in all its aspects.

DON'T

Hold committee elections in a vacuum or emphasize machinery above subject matter.

DO

Elect a responsible steering committee that will coordinate and stimulate the work of all subcommittees, and will authorize, with reference to the whole group, the work of each subcommittee.

DON'T

Let subcommittees go off on individual tangents which may duplicate the work of other subcommittees.

DO

Make liberal use of "live" resources in seeking answers to study-group questions. Consult community and school officials, industry, labor, health and housing authorities, architects, etc.

DON'T

Rely on printed statistics to provide all the answers.

DO

Keep the whole community continuously up to date on the methods, findings, activities of the group as you progress. Report to the press. Send speakers to meetings. Hold open forums.

DON'T

Wait until your study is complete to let others know what you are doing.

DO

Be sure final recommendations are based on a factual foundation and represent the views of the entire group in relation to the community. Include study of financial resources which can be tapped to support your recommendations.

DON'T

Make "wishful" recommendations, which are not related to available sources of income, or to the needs of your community.

DO

Officially share final recommendations with school authorities before releasing them generally.

DON'T

Release final recommendations before school authorities have officially examined them.

DO

Develop dramatic means of presenting your final recommendations to the entire town. Plan definite avenues of action leading to adoption of recommendations.

DON'T

File your recommendations and forget about them.

DO

Consider ways in which a school community council can be of permanent service to the town.

DON'T

Consider your job as finished when you have completed your first full study.

DO

Present several acceptable recommendations in priority order to the School Board or administration.

DON'T

Submit single recommendations to policy-makers or administrators.

ESTABLISHING A NEW GROUP

Source: Conrad Powell, *Improving Communications Within the Council,* School Advisory Council Guides, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C., 1979.

I. CLIMATE SETTING

Most councils find it helpful to begin the year with some time devoted to having individual members get acquainted with each other. This is usually best accomplished in light, informal ways. It is important that all members feel comfortable and at ease in their role as advisory council members. It may be helpful for the principal to briefly review the roles and responsibilities of the council and allow all new members to ask a few questions or make a few comments about the advisory council in general.

Setting a positive and open climate or mood for working together during the coming months may be the first step towards becoming an effective council. The following possibilities for setting a good climate may be considered:

1. **Who's Who.** One person introduces him/herself, the next person introduces the person just introduced and him/herself, the next person introduces everyone already introduced, plus him/herself, and so on until the last person can call the name of all persons on the council. This is a good icebreaker, especially if the council is relatively small (less than 10).

2. **Introductions Reversed**: Have each person get together with someone not previously known and take a couple of minutes to get to know that person. Then each introduces the other and includes some information about job, family, interest and hobbies. This procedure gets people talking and also gives information to other members that may help the council to know more about its members' backgrounds and interests.

3. Take a 15-minute coffee break and have (a type of scavenger hunt) members find:
   a. Someone with a similar hobby.
   b. Someone born the same year or same month.
   c. Someone with the same primary reason for being on the council.
   d. Other things which may be of general interest.

After the break it is good to come back together to briefly discuss what was learned about various group members.

4. **Council Information**: It may be helpful for the principal or chairperson to prepare a handout with all names, addresses, telephone numbers and categories represented for each council member. This information can help members to become familiar with names as well as positions represented on the council. This information should also be published in the school and local newspaper as soon as possible so that the community can be in touch if necessary.

Remember, it is most important for all members of a council to feel at ease and familiar with one another if they are to work effectively and efficiently.

Activity No. 1

Select one of the climate setting activities described above, or another one, and do it together. Try to reach a point as quickly as possible where all council members are familiar with names, backgrounds, and interests.

II. ESTABLISHING GROUND RULES

After climate-setting activities, it is often helpful to involve the group in setting council ground rules and procedures. Questions to consider might focus on, and include:

1. Why are we here? And what do we expect to accomplish?

2. What procedures for working, discussing, and decision-making will best help us accomplish our goals?
   - Councils work better when individual members are involved in setting expected outcomes and procedures.

3. What sort of agenda will we need, who will set it, and how rigidly will it be followed?
   - Agendas are essential in helping a council focus on one task at a time.

4. How will we record and publish decisions and task assignments? Generally, it will be necessary for someone (a council secretary) to take minutes at each meeting and, if possible, provide each council member with a copy of the minutes at the next meeting. In that way every member will clearly understand the decisions made. Assigning specific tasks, and expected dates for completing these tasks, is essential if decisions are to be implemented effectively. It would be a good idea for the council to decide how this information could be provided on a regular basis to the community; for example a newsletter or regular reports to the PTA, Booster Club, etc. This is good public relations for the school and will generally result in more active support by the community.

Ground Rules for Good Discussion

A good group discussion is an open discussion with all members participating. Discussion is vital to an advisory council's success and will lead to effective decision making. Here are some pointers for good group discussion.

1. **Speak your mind freely.** The discussion meeting is yours—a chance for you to say what you think. Say it.

2. **Listen critically, thoughtfully to others.** Try hard to get the other person's point of view—see what experience and thinking it rests on. See if you can learn from him or her.

3. **Don't monopolize the discussion.** Don't speak for more than a minute or so at a time. Make your point in a few words. Give others a chance.

4. **Don't let the discussion get away from you.** If you don't understand where it is going, say so. Ask for examples, cases, illustrations until you really understand.

5. **Indulge in friendly disagreement.** When you find that you're on the other side of the fence from the discussion, say so and tell why, but disagree in a friendly way. A sound conclusion is your only concern.

6. **Come with questions in mind.** Make notes of questions and points of disagreement and bring them to the meetings. Preparation saves time.

7. **Strike while the idea is hot.** Don't wait to be called on. That good idea you have will either be forgotten or presented by someone else if you wait.

8. **Be relaxed.** An attitude of ease and friendliness will help set the right atmosphere. Don't worry if discussion lags once in a while.

9. **Never argue a question or fact.** Look up the answer or delegate someone to do so for the next meeting. Arguing is a waste of council time.

Ground Rules for Discussion Leaders

Read and discuss these suggestions. Then adopt or adapt any that seem to be helpful.

1. Getting ready for the meeting
   a. Provide an agenda for each member.
   b. Arrange group in circle, so each person can see every other person.
   c. Provide table space, if convenient, for leader and entire group.
   d. Let all stay seated during discussion, including leader. Keep it informal.
   e. Check to see if everybody is comfortable. Check ventilation and lighting.
   f. See that everybody knows one another or make introductions.
   g. Learn names of all as soon as you can.
   h. In opening, emphasize: Everyone is encouraged to take part. If one member's view is not represented and recognized, the discussion falls short and is not fully representative of the council.
   i. Emphasize: No speeches, by leader or group member. No monopoly.
   j. Have blackboard, chalk, and eraser ready for use in case of need. Appoint a "blackboard secretary" if the subject matter and occasion make it desirable.
   k. Start on time, follow the agenda, and close at a prearranged time.

2. Carrying on: How to keep the meeting moving
   a. Help the group to clarify its objectives so that the purpose of the meeting is clear. Let the group amend the agenda if necessary, but keep it limited to the task upon which it is working.
   b. Aim at getting a sharply defined question before the group. Have three of four alternatives put on board if you think this will help: "Which do you want to start with?" Is this question clear?"
   c. In general, don't put questions to particular group members, unless you see that an idea is trying to find words there anyway: "Mrs. Brown, you were about to say something." Otherwise: "Let's have some discussion of this question . . . What do the rest of you think about this? What's been the experience of the folks up in the northern part of the state in this connection?" etc.
   d. Interrupt the "speech maker" as tactfully as possible: "While we're on this point, let's hear from some of the others. Can we save your other point 'til later?" This is difficult to do at times, but in fairness to other members it is important that no one monopolizes the discussion at any time.
   e. Keep discussion on the track; always directed but let the group lay its own track to a large extent. Don't groove it narrowly yourself. Remember: The leader's opinion does count in the discussion, but keep your own view out of it as much as possible. Your job is to get the ideas of all council members out for an airing.
   g. If you see that an important aspect of the discussion is being overlooked or neglected, point it out: "Bill Jones was telling me last week that he thinks . . . What do you think of that?"
   h. Keep the spirits high. Encourage ease, informality, good humor. Foster friendly disagreement if it occurs. Listen with respect and appreciation to all ideas, but stress what is important, and turn discussion away from what is not.
   i. Take time every ten minutes or so to draw the loose ends together: "Let's see where we've been going." Be as fair and accurate in summary as possible. Close discussion with summary—your own or the secretary's.
   j. Call attention to unanswered questions for future study or for reference back to speakers. Nourish a desire in group members for continuing study and discussion through skillful closing summary.

Activity No. 2

Using the ideas and suggestions outlined under "Establishing Ground Rules," conduct a discussion concerning how the council will communicate its activities and decisions to the school community. Be specific.

III. CRITICAL PLANNING GROUPS

Citizen advisory committees should consider forming critical planning groups (CPGs) to assist them with planning and debriefing regular meetings of the large group. CPGs can be composed of 3 to 7 people, who also serve as members of the main group. Their primary responsibilities are to assist in planning the next large group meeting, to debrief the last meeting, and to share leadership roles in group meetings. CPGs should function interdependently on such tasks as:

- assessing problems and needs
- identifying alternative ways to improve committee effectiveness
- evaluating the success of improvement efforts, and
- designing training activities.

BASIC ESSENTIALS FOR CONDUCTING AN EFFECTIVE MEETING

Source: *Group Work Skills – The How To's*, Utah State Office of Education, 1980.

Before the Meeting

1. Plan the agenda and the activities for the meeting.
2. If possible, make sure people have a copy of the agenda before the meeting.
3. Collect the required materials and prepare any visuals you plan to use.
4. Be sure physical arrangements are in order.
5. Relax! Take a couple of deep breaths. Close your eyes and imagine the meeting you've planned. Picture what you'll say and do. Image how well the meeting progresses. Experience the feeling of confidence, pride and satisfaction you have when the meeting is over. Congratulate yourself on the effort and care you have put into this session.

During the Meeting

1. **Take care of people's needs to feel included and important.** Try one of the following techniques to start the meeting:

   Introduce each person.

   Let each person introduce himself and briefly tell something about himself.

   Give people a chance to talk to the person sitting next to them and then have each person introduce his partner.

   Ask people to think about their opinion on a pertinent topic and share their opinion when they introduce themselves.
   (See section on Getting Acquainted activities for additional ideas)

2. **Take care of people's need to use their time wisely.** Try one of the following techniques or make up one of your own:

   - Tell the group what you plan to accomplish at this meeting.
   - Ask the group to list their expectations for the meeting.
   - Copy the agenda on the board or hand out copies to members so people can review the meeting plans.
   - Ask the group to participate in building the agenda.

3. Remember that the best laid plans go astray. If the plans you've developed are not working, make some quick adjustments. Trust yourself to make changes that are appropriate.

At the End of the Meeting

1. Review what happened during the meeting.
2. Make special mention of the decisions that have been made and the next steps to carry out the decisions.
3. Express appreciation to those people who made a significant contribution to the success of the meeting.
4. Ask everybody to contribute to an evaluation of the meeting.
5. Thank everybody for their participation.
6. Announce the date, time, place and purpose of the next meeting.

After the Meeting

1. Compare the agenda and activities you planned for the meeting with what actually happened. identify the things that went smoothly. What were the surprises or the difficult aspects of the meeting?
2. Review the effectiveness of the materials you used; the visual aids, the handouts, or the newsprint.
3. Consider what was said during the debriefing of the meeting. What ideas or suggestions can you build into the next meeting?
4. Talk with one or two other members of the group to get their ideas about what went well during the meeting and what might be done differently to improve its effectiveness.
5. Celebrate! Appreciate yourself for the effort you put into the meeting. Enjoy your courage to be a leader for this group. Congratulate yourself for your continued effort to grow and learn. Sit back, take a deep breath, relax and say to yourself, "You did good!"

CHECKLIST FOR TASKS RELATED TO MEETINGS

Participants in meetings should feel that the time they spent was worthwhile. Although no one can guarantee that every meeting will be regarded as meaningful, the convener can take some steps to address people's concerns. This is done by assuming certain responsibilities before, during, and after a meeting. Use the list to see how well you are doing in conducting meetings.

	Arrangements Complete ( )
I. Before the Meeting	
A. Arrange for adequate facilities.	_____
B. Prepare a tentative agenda.	_____
C. Circulate the agenda in advance.	_____
II. During the Meeting	
A. At the beginning of the meeting	
1. Call the meeting to order at the designated time.	_____
2. Be certain that there is a recorder.	_____
3. If you are familiar with the role of group observer, appoint one.	_____
4. State the purpose of the meeting.	_____
5. Review and agree on the tentative agenda.	_____
6. Estimate the amount of time to be spent on each item.	_____
7. Prioritize the items on the agenda.	_____
B. During the meeting:	
1. Keep the group focused on its purpose.	_____
2. Monitor the discussion so that everyone has a chance to speak.	_____
3. Clarity and summarize when appropriate.	_____
4. Assist the group in using agreed upon procedures.	_____
5. Bring out all sides of an issue.	_____
6. Move the group toward decisions.	_____
7. Test for consensus.	_____
8. Use knowledge and skills brought out in the sections on Leading a Discussion (J) and Communication (K).	_____

C. At the end of the meeting:

1. Make sure assignments and agreements are clear. _____

2. Announce the date, time and place of the next meeting. _____

3. Identify the purpose of the next meeting and any items that will be on that agenda. _____

4. If there was a group observer, hear the report. _____

5. Debrief the meeting. _____

III. **After the Meeting**

A. Check with the recorder to be sure that the minutes are clear _____

B. Help others carry out the decisions made during the meeting. _____

GUIDELINES FOR AGENDAS

Unfocused discussion, or wandering meetings, is one of the primary problems experienced by groups. One solution is to develop and use an agenda which clearly outlines the topics to be covered, action expected, time needed, and person responsible. Following are several guidelines for developing agendas.

1. Call all members to identify meeting topics.

2. State the committee's name.

3. Indicate the date, time, and location.

4. List for every agenda item the amount of time needed, action (i.e., information, discussion, or decision) and person responsible.

5. Compile background materials.

6. Distribute the agenda and support materials at least five days before the meeting.

SAMPLE MEETING AGENDA

Community Relations Advisory Committee

Salem Public Schools — 1309 Ferry Street, SE — Salem, Oregon 97301

DECEMBER 16, 1980
BOARD ROOM, ADMIN. BLDG.
7:00 - 9:30 PM

AGENDA

TIME		TOPIC	ACTION	PERSON
7:00 PM	(30 min.)	LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES RICHARD MUNN, School Finance SKIP LIEBERTZ, 24J Legislative priorities JIM HAVEL, How to work with with legislature		PANEL
7:30 PM	(5 min.)	INTRODUCTIONS/PREVIEW AGENDA		
7:35 PM	(5 min.)	APPROVAL OF MINUTES	DECISION	JIM KING
7:40 PM	(20 min.)	REPORTS		
		CHAIRPERSON	INFORMATION	JIM KING
		BOARD	INFORMATION	MARY HOYT
		STAFF	INFORMATION	GREG HANSEN/ SKIP LIEBERTZ
		COMMITTEE + COMPLAINTS	INFORMATION	CRAC MEMBERS
		SUB-COMMITTEES	INFORMATION	CRAC MEMBERS
		LSACs	INFORMATION	CRAC & LSAC MEMBERS
8:00 PM	(5 min.)	STATUS REPORT ON CRAC WORKPLAN	INFORMATION	JIM KING
8:05 PM	(20 min.)	FOLLOW UP ON SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT - VISITATION TO WILLAGILLESPIE - SURVEY ON LSACs/PRINCIPALS	DECISION	JIM KING
8:25 PM	(15 min.)	LAND USE ISSUES - DISTRICT WIDE COMMITTEE	DISCUSSION	JIM RYAN
		- PROCEDURES FOR OVERCROWDED SCHOOLS	DISCUSSION	JERRY BROCK
8:40 PM	(30 min.)	CRAC ROLE WITH LSACs	DECISION	CRAC MEMBERS
9:10 PM	(5 min.)	EVALUATION OF REPORT CARDS	DECISION	CHARLENE ANDREWS
9:15 PM	(5 min.)	NEW BUSINESS		
9:20 PM	(5 min.)	TINY ITEMS	ANYTHING	ANYBODY
9:25 PM	(5 min.)	DEBRIEF	DISCUSSION	COMMITTEE GREG HANSEN
9:30 PM		A D J O U R N		

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Salem School District 24J complies with provisions of the various civil rights laws, such as the Fair Employment Practices Act, Title IX Regulations, and section 504 of PL 89.313 in employment and educational programs and activities.

AGENDA FACT SHEETS

Agenda fact sheets can be used by citizen groups when preparing and submitting reports to other groups or the School Board. The purpose of a fact sheet is to organize basic information about a situation in a clear, concise manner. Fact sheets can include a situational statement, background information, alternative solutions and recommendations. Some fact sheets also include information about program, fiscal or policy implications and possible use guidelines. You may add, delete or modify the following fact sheet for your use.

AGENDA FACT SHEET

TO:

FROM:

SUBJECT:

Situation:

Background Information:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Alternatives:

1.

2.

3.

Recommendation:

Program Implications:

Policy Implications:

Fiscal Implications:

Number of People Affected:

Possible Use Guidelines:

1.

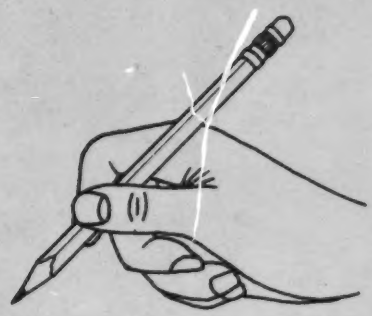
2.

3.

4.

5.

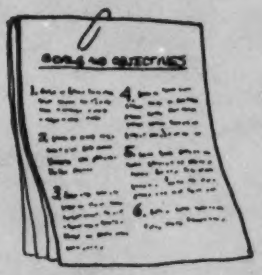
GUIDELINES FOR KEEPING MINUTES



Source:
From Better Meetings: *A Handbook for Trainers of Policy Councils and Other Decision-Making Groups* by Carol S. Hoge, Humanics Press, 1975.

1. State whether the meeting is a regular meeting or a specially called meeting.
2. Give the name of the council and the time, date and place of the meeting.
3. State name and position of person chairing council.
4. Note whether minutes of last meeting were approved or not.
5. List names of members who are present.
6. State names of guests and where they are from.
7. State whether committee reports are given. If so, a written copy should be recorded in minutes.
8. Record discussion on old business and new business.
9. State all motions or recommendations made and whether they were accepted or rejected. Record suggestions that do not become motions.
10. Give names of people making motions or suggestions and the name of the person who seconds the motion.
11. Summarize the debate pro and con on each recommendation.
12. State any announcements made.
13. Record what went on in the meeting after old and new business—such as speakers or presentations.
14. State the time when the meeting ended.
15. The secretary or recorder should sign the minutes.

SETTING PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



Source: Carl A. Carpenter, *Setting Program Goals and Objectives*, School Advisory Council Activity Guides, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, 1979.

I. PURPOSE

It is essential that a council be able to effectively translate identified student needs into appropriate goals and objectives. This paper is designed to help councils improve their skills in the total process of setting goals and writing objectives. The purpose of this guide is to enable each council member to:

1. Understand the differences between the terms need, goal, and objective.
2. Understand the process by which appropriate goals are selected for the educational program.
3. Write specific and measurable objectives to accomplish identified goals.
4. Plan activities and tasks to implement and accomplish objectives.
5. Evaluate progress toward goals through review of completed objectives.

II. NEEDS, GOALS, OBJECTIVES: 5 BASIC STEPS

It is important to recognize the difference between the terms need, goal, and objective. Each term has a specific meaning in education and each represents a specific step in the completion of a thorough annual school report.

A systematic approach to the task of identifying needs, setting goals, and writing objectives includes five steps:

Step 1. **Identifying Needs.** What are student/program needs?

Step 2. **Setting Goals.** What general direction must be taken to improve or update school programs to meet student needs?

Step 3. **Writing Objectives.** What targets for change will be set to reach the goals?

Step 4. **Planning Activities to Achieve Objectives.** What tasks must be planned and accomplished to complete objectives?

Step 5. **Evaluating Progress.** Was the objective reached and does the objective still lead to goal accomplishment? How do you know?

Step 1. Needs Assessment

Needs assessment is measuring the gap between what is and what ought to be. It can be specifically outlined and defined in five steps.

1. Find out about the current educational program.
2. Identify possible problem areas.
3. Verify the problem—find the facts.
4. Restate the problem.
5. Analyze the causes of the problem.

It is important to give full attention to the process of needs assessment if the council is to pinpoint program strengths and weaknesses. The five steps suggested to complete a needs assessment are each important and will help the council recognize and organize student/program needs.

It would be impossible to set goals and write objectives for your school's educational program without first identifying needs. In many situations, a council will find that many identified needs are similar or fall in line with other needs. This gives a clue about what problem areas are of primary concern.

Examples of Needs:

Need No. 1: The scores of Brownsville Elementary students on a standardized reading test reveal they are performing one grade level below the state average in reading achievement. Apparently there is a need to improve student achievement in reading.

Need No. 2: The State Department of Education reports that four science teachers in Brownsville middle school are improperly certified to teach science. There is a need to improve the professional credential status of the science teachers.

Need No. 3: 80% of the parents of children, grades 1-3, feel that students in Brownsville Elementary are not making satisfactory progress in math. Parents feel there is a need to improve the math program in the school.

As you can see, there are several ways of identifying needs—test scores, information received from the State Department of Education, community perceptions, etc. In the case of Need No. 3, the parents' perception of a problem may or may not indicate a real educational problem. Maybe it indicates a need for better communication with the parents, but that too would be a need. All needs, therefore, should be verified and analyzed before moving to Step 2, Setting Goals. Remember, too, that as a council you must understand the causes of a problem before you look for solutions.

Step 2. Setting Goals

Once a council has conducted a needs assessment they can begin the process of setting goals. Goals are derived directly from identified needs. They are comprehensive and address themselves to the major roles and functions of the school. Goals may constitute the expansion or strengthening of existing programs, the development of new programs, or they may define the direction toward which school programs are to move. A goal can be defined as: a statement of broad direction, purpose, or intent based on the identified needs of the community, school learners and teachers. A goal may be general or timeless; that is, not concerned with a specific achievement within a specific time period.

A school goal should meet the following criteria:

1. Be taken directly from the process of needs assessment.

2. Be outcome-oriented.

3. Be explicit.

4. Be supported by a series of objectives.

Goals must communicate intent to anyone who reads them. They should not be statements or symbols which are meaningful only to the writer or school administrators. They should be easily understood by all readers. Restated, a goal gives general direction to the effort to improve the program.

In setting goals for school programs a council may ask: "What do we have now that we like, what do we need to improve, and what do we need to add?"

In answering these questions, a council may see the need for improving or adding to the educational program. If so, describe the program problem situation or dificiency as identified in the needs assessment and then describe the situation with the problem corrected. By doing this the council can determine what changes are needed to move from problem situation to the problem corrected. Without establishing a "target,"–the situation with the problem corrected– it is easy to drift aimlessly or to carry out many activities which may not actually help solve your problem. It is important at this point for the council to determine what courses of action are needed to move from problems described to a point where the problem is removed or reduced. Determining what will be needed to move from the problem to correction of that problem will help determine the objectives that should be written in the next step.

Example of a need followed by a related goal–

Need: The scores of Brownsville Elementary students on a standardized reading test reveal they are performing one grade level below the state average in reading achievement. There is a need to improve the school's reading program.

Goal: To improve the Brownsville elementary school reading program and increase the reading skills of the elementary students.

Step 3. Writing Objectives

Once needs are identified and goals stated accordingly, a statement of objectives then follows.

Objectives should be stated in terms of expected outcomes and results. Objectives are written as targets for the change described in a goal. Objectives are more specific and need to be realistic in amount of change expected in a certain time frame.

Objectives include a measure of the amount of change expected to take place. Objectives must be directly observable, such as test scores, or have aspects that lend themselves to indirect measurement, such as parent attitude or teacher morale. After all, how will a council know what has been accomplished if it can't be measured in some way?

In most cases, there will be a number of objectives stated for each goal. Objectives are "end products" and care must be taken not to list means of reaching objectives. Means or steps to be taken in accomplishing objectives will be detailed in the next section.

When writing objectives, consider the following questions:

1. Does the objective specify exactly what is to be done in "action terms?"

   Action words are those that lend themselves to some type of measurement. Examples include to hold, to list, to train, to design, to recruit, to identify, etc.

2. Does the objective specify who will be involved?

3. Does the objective specify how much or how well it will be done?

4. Does the objective state when it will be done?

Now let's apply these requirements to the following objective:

Need: The scores of Brownsville Elementary students on a standardized reading test reveal they are performing one grade level below the state average in reading achievement. There is a need to improve the school's reading program.

Goal: To improve the Brownsville elementary school reading program and increase the reading skills of the elementary students.

Objective: Design and implement K-6 word recognition reading activities which will by June 10, 1980, increase student achievement in word recognition skills by 15% mean improvement over the prior year's performance on the previously used standardized reading test.

Step 4. Planning Activities to Achieve Objectives

Up to this step, we have talked about assessing needs, as well as determining and writing goals and objectives for meeting those needs. The next step is planning the activities which will accomplish these goals and objectives, or more simply, solve the problem and meet the need.

Task planning is of major importance in that the actual work to be done to improve school programs is organized and implemented here. Task planning is essentially the refining of objectives. This process involves three steps:

1. Identifying and planning the activities or tasks necessary to be completed in order for the objective to be met.

2. Deciding on who will be responsible for the completion of each task.

3. Setting a date or timetable by which the task should be completed.

Task Identification

Now that specific objectives have been established, it is necessary to develop a step-by-step procedure which can be used to make sure the objective is carried out. The council as a whole should have input and make certain that all vital tasks are identified, that all necessary people are involved and notified, and that these tasks are coordinated in regard to other goals. Tasks are directly related to objectives. They are procedures necessary for accomplishing the objectives.

To identify necessary tasks it is sometimes helpful to think backwards from the objective. You might think of tasks as sub-objectives which can be sequenced so as to show the procedure necessary for accomplishing each main objective. Remember–an objective is simply a specific action statement which has been identified as necessary to accomplishing a particular goal.

At this point, the council is really getting into curriculum planning and should rely heavily upon the trained educators in the school and/or the administrative offices. Curriculum specialists are also available who can assist schools in planning curriculum to meet the goals and objectives set by the school.

Your council may begin to feel some frustration due to the fact that the council has been dealing in the "ideal." You may find the tasks or activities that seem best suited to meet the objectives require spending money that the school doesn't have or that the requirements for all the other subject areas don't allow as much time as you'd like to see spent on this objective. Thus, the council may very well come up with short and long-range objectives to meet a particular goal, and you may have to go back now and rework the objectives. If new textbooks or additional material are needed for a task or activity, the council may have to adopt another objective of getting funds to cover the cost.

It is important to remember that an annual school report not only sets the goals and objectives, but, also outlines the budget priorities and strategies for accomplishing those goals and objectives.

Thus the group development of task plans is essentially a quality control procedure to make sure that everything gets done which needs to be done to successfully accomplish the objective.

Fix Responsibility

If any plan is to be successful then it depends upon the person responsible for carrying it out. An annual school report is simply a written document that cannot effect change if people do not take the responsibility to put written objectives into action. Designating someone as responsible does not say that the person will do all the work. It does however, place that person (or persons) in a position to see that the task is completed.

Set a Completion Date

Just as a plan may fail for lack of a person responsible, it may fail for lack of a specified completion date. Completion dates are helpful in that they allow for planning and set up a timetable that a council can work with. A completion date may need to be revised at times, but some expectations for completion must be built into the process of setting goals and writing objectives.

Example of Need/Goal/Objective Followed by Related Activities

Need: The scores of Brownsville Elementary students on a standardized reading test reveal they are performing one grade level below the state average in reading achievement. There is a need to improve the school's reading program.

Goal: To improve the Brownsville elementary school reading program and increase the reading skills of the elementary students.

Objective: Design and implement K-6 word recognition reading activities which will by June 10, 1980, increase student achievement in word recognition skills by 15% mean improvement over the year's performance on the previously used standardized reading test.

Task: Assign specific reading personnel from the school and district office to help plan the word recognition activities.

Person Responsible: One member of council (perhaps a teacher) and the principal.

Completion Date: Two weeks from today.

Resources: Other teacher suggestions/parent suggestions; District Office personnel; State Department of Education personnel; available volunteers.

Step 5. Evaluating Progress

Since the preparation of an annual school report is a continuing process, a periodic review of all goals and objectives will be a "built-in" part of an advisory council's job. Long term and short-term review and evaluation is obviously necessary if programmatic improvements are to be implemented.

Periodic checks should be made on:

1. **Goals**: are they still appropriate and feasible?
2. **Objectives**: are they still moving toward accomplishment of the goal?
3. **Tasks**: are they still feasible and appropriate for meeting objectives?
4. **Completion dates**: are they on schedule? Have there been breakdowns which will affect other parts of the plan?

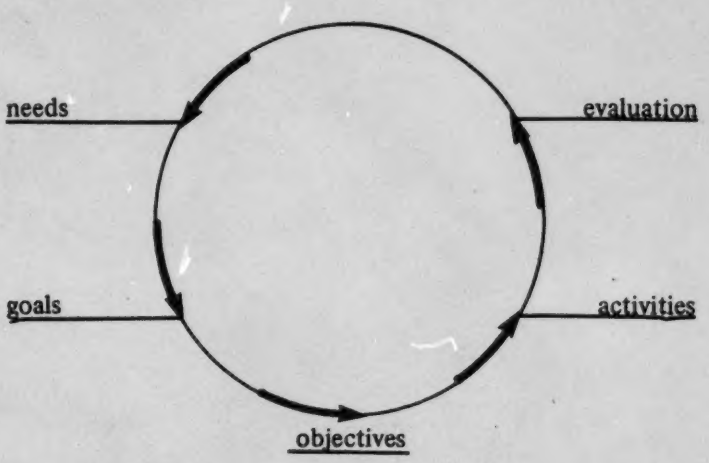
A final check should be made on each goal—was it reached? This is important in terms of updating goals in the annual report. When the last objective has been met the goal should be accomplished and the problem solved.

If the council finds that the goal has not been met then the following options might be considered.

1. A new plan can be designed, going through all the steps again.
2. Part of the original plan can be re-designed and then implemented.
3. Part or all of the same plan can be repeated.

III. CONCLUSIONS

It is important that the council view all five steps as an on-going and building process. The five steps could be viewed as an unending circle:



Hopefully, by following these five Basic Steps and using all the resources available to you, your school will develop a well planned and coordinated educational program for its students.

INFORMATION GATHERING TECHNIQUES IN ASSESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Source: Lynne E. Cooper, *Needs Assessment*, School Advisory Council Activity Guides, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, 1979.

How can councils get information about the most important school and community problems? Several methods are described here. They vary in difficulty, cost and degree of "representativeness" of the entire school community.

GROUP DISCUSSION OF PROBLEM AREAS

Group discussion of problem areas is the simplest and cheapest method of identifying school or community needs. However, if the council is not representative of the entire school community it may also be the least representative of everyone's opinions. If your council is truly representative of all types of people involved with the school, this method should work well.

When people get together to discuss something, some people never speak up, while others never stop talking. Sometimes, you may leave a meeting feeling that no one has understood what anyone else said, and that the group has accomplished nothing. A group discussion process has been developed that gives everyone an equal chance to express their opinions and discuss them freely:[3]

1. In 5-10 minutes, individually write down on paper the major problems you see for the area your council has selected for study. Write down any ideas you have, whether they come from personal experience or are what others have told you.

2. Taking turns and without discussion, each council member should state one problem at a time. Someone should record each of these problems on a chalkboard or flip-chart so that everyone can see the complete list. Continue until everyone has mentioned all of their problems.

3. After all the problems are listed, discuss each one for several minutes. Ask questions to clarify the problem. Why do members see it as a problem? What is their standard or ideal state-of-affairs? Pay particular attention to the different standards that people have for what ought to be happening in the schools. How many students are affected?

4. Be sure that each problem is stated as a problem. Those that are really program solutions should be questioned and restated in terms of the problem implied by them. The following statements are similar to ones that you may come up with. For practice, restate each as a problem. Asking yourself "why" after each statement will help you.

   "We need more guidance counselors."

   "We need more money for instructional materials and supplies."

   "We need more school nurses."

   "We need more space and books in our school library."

5. After discussion, give each member a peice of paper. Each person should select 3 problems from the list as the ones she/he sees as most important, and write them on the paper. Tally the votes. The top-vote getters should be the problems the council continues to work on.

COMMUNITY CONFERENCES

At a community conference, people sit in small groups and discuss a question; e.g., "What are the most important problems of students in our school?" They write down their ideas and exchange them with another group of people. The second group makes written comments on them. The original groups get their problem statements back, read the comments, and then rank the problems, starting with the most important one. The problems that rank at the top for most groups are the ones the advisory council could work on.

The idea of a community conference was developed by a superintendent in a Fresno, California school district. It is similar to the council group discussion method, but involves all parents of children in the school. It is a way to get more representative opinions of school problems.

PUBLIC MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

Inviting others to participate in council meetings can help advisory councils gain a more representative view of school or community problems. The discussion technique described for the community conference can be used in public meetings to give everyone a chance to express an opinion.

OPINION SURVEYS

If you get a good response, a survey can be a good way to get a representative view of what people think. The weakness of a survey is that people can't discuss the problems among themselves and change their opinions.

One purpose of doing a survey is to gain an understanding of what people think the most important needs are. There are several ways to do opinion surveys: telephone, door-to-door, mail-out or hand out to students. Each method has advantages and disadvantages. Before conducting an opinion survey, it is important to understand some basics about designing surveys. Remember– these surveys give you information on people's opinions which may or may not be factual or true! That is what you must find out in further steps of an overall needs assessment.

Some people think after they have finished identifying problems they have completed a needs assessment and are ready to find solutions to problems. A good assessment, however, includes three other important steps before solutions are developed:

a. Verify the problems
b. Further define the problems
c. Determine the causes of the problems.

[3] Andre Q. Delbecq, et al, *Group Techniques for Program Planning: A Guide to Nominal Group and Delphi Process:* Glenview, Illinois, Scott Foresman, 1975.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER BEFORE ASSESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Before any community needs assessment is conducted, the council and staff should consider the following types of questions. These questions should provide a foundation for any needs assessment. When people don't examine the purpose for conducting a needs assessment, the outcome is seriously jeopardized.

A. Why do you want to conduct a needs assessment? **Purpose.**

B. What is a needs assessment? **Definition.**

C. What information is already available? **Information sources.**

D. What do you really need to know? **Focus.**

E. What are you going to do with the information? **Results.**

F. How do you plan to involve your council and other organizations? **Roles.**

G. Who is requesting the needs assessment? **Initiative.**

H. What information-gathering techniques have you considered? **Alternatives.**

NEEDS ASSESSMENT APPROACHES

Approach	How	Advantages	Disadvantages
KEY INFORMANT	Gather information from key formal and informal community leaders.	Wide variety of opinions; relatively inexpensive; simple to conduct; lines of communication can be established or improved.	Direct involvement with only a few people; people may not be "representative"; built-in bias of those individuals who see community needs from their own perspective.
COMMUNITY FORUM	Town meetings.	Many voices are heard; easy to arrange; inexpensive to conduct; aids in identifying people to help work on needs; conduct in schools or other community facilities.	Data is hard to gather systematically, difficult to obtain representative group, potential for negative outcomes such as gripe session; may heighten unrealistic expectations.
SOCIAL INDICATORS	Analyze available demographic data.	Vast pools of data are easily available; data is reliable and inexpensive to obtain, foundation for other needs assessment efforts.	Does not directly involve community; data collected in various ways; difficult to compare data; data outdated.
RATES UNDER TREATMENT	Gather information from agencies that have conducted surveys or possess client records.	Availability of data; relatively low cost, people will not feel "over-surveyed"; up-to-date information; improves communication between organizations.	Indirect involvement of community; data outdated; difficulty guaranteeing redundant anonymity; don't overestimate entire community needs from sample population.
SURVEY	Questionnaire or interviews.	Wide involvement; up-to-date, valid, reliable information; utility of facts; flexibility.	Time consuming, expensive; can flop if poorly planned; reluctance of some people to respond.

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

Alternatives	Description
Citizen advisory committees	School Board refers problems and issues to appointed local and/or district-wide citizen advisory committees for review and recommendations, e.g, CRAC, LSAC, Title IX, Career Education.
School Board meetings	Citizens can express their opinions, oral and/or written, at the biweekly School Board meetings.
Public hearing Public briefing Public meeting	Opportinity for citizens to receive information on a specific issue, to ask questions and, at times, to express opinions. Attendance open with unlimited meeting size. Could be by School Board zone, administrative area, high school attendance area, or district-wide.
Board and/or CRAC standing subcommittees	Citizens are encouraged to attend and participate in School Board and/or CRAC standing subcommittee meetings.
Task forces Blue ribbon panel	Formation of ad hoc, short term task forces, composed of a limited number of citizens, staff and/or School Board members. Board defines charge, timeline, and composition.
Public opinion polls	Surveys to gauge public opinion about issues, program options or past performance. Conducted by citizen advisory committees, staff and/or private research firms. Personal interviews, telephone, mail, newsletter, or newspaper surveys.
LSAC chairpeople	Regular or irregular meetings of representatives from each school's LSAC could occur by administrative area, board zone, high school attendance area, school type, or district-wide. These meetings also could be attended by School Board members or administrators.
Comment solicitation	Opportunity for citizens to make recommendations without face-to-face meeting. Citizens or organizations receive copy of bill, regulations, or project plan for comment.
Town hall meetings	Public meetings by School Board zone using citizen, Board, and staff teams to present information about school district issues and assess public opinion.
Community seminar Workshop	Presentation of information about an issue or program.
Telephone Tree	A network or system for calling people to assess their opinions or share information.
Community forums	Opportunity for people with opposing viewpoints to attend and debate issues.
Block plan Outreach	The district could plan and implement a neighborhood block plan to address issues by conducting neighborhood meetings around various issues.

Community Congress	Each school would appoint one or two individuals (citizens and/or staff) to represent itself at a district-wide congress to examine a problem, identify alternative solutions, and select the most feasible solution to recommend to the School Board.
Charette	An intensive planning method usually involving a cross-section of those interested in or affected by an issue. An extended planning workshop (2-10 days). Specific group planning techniques.

Basic questions to consider when selecting a citizen involvement option:

1. What is the purpose of the citizen involvement technique?
2. What geographic area needs to be covered?
3. Who is the primary audience?
4. Who should serve as resource people?
5. How shall the technique be implemented?
6. What are the anticipated outcomes?
7. What are the non-negotiable decision requirements?
8. What is the School Board's and/or administration's decision-making process?

THE S-T-P MODEL OF PROBLEM ANALYSIS

Source: Fosmire and Wallen, 1971.

Definitions

Symptoms: We usually feel that a problem exists before we can define it. Incidents or conditions that evoke dissatisfaction, frustration, tension, and other negative feelings we call symptoms of a problem. Such symptom incidents arouse negative feelings because a more desirable alternate state is implied although the person may be unaware of what it is. Thus, we say a problem exists when we experience a discrepancy between the current state (of which we are somewhat aware) and a **desired alternate state** (of which we are usually unaware).

Problem Definition: Solving a problem is more than just preventing the reoccurrence of symptoms. Thus, a problem is not defined until three sets of information have been made explicit. (1) What are the essential features of the current state? (2) What are the key attributes of the desired alternate state? (3) What forces facilitate and what impede our moving from the current to the more desired state? A study of symptoms can reveal information of all three types.

Problem Solution: Actions which the group members can support and which will change the current state into the more desired alternate state.

S-T-P Model: A method of organizing information to define a problem and to resolve or manage conflict that occurs in creating a solution.

Model

Information is organized into three interrelated dimensions:

The **Situation** Dimension: Information about (a) the essential features of the current state and (b) the forces that facilitate and that impede moving to a more desired state.

The **Target** Dimension: The desired state. What we want to accomplish and to avoid. Targets are chosen because those working on the problem value and desire them; they are not imposed. (Imposed requirements are part of the situation dimension.)

Targets are always more general than proposals; the same target may be achieved by different proposals.

The **Proposal Plan** Dimension: Specific action proposals aimed at changing the current state into the desired state. "Who will do what by when?" Any proposal for action always implies some view of the situation and of the target.

Following are some common expressions and terms that fit into the three dimensions.

Situation	**Target**	**Proposal/Plan**
Starting point	Termination	Path from S to T
Facts, opinions, explanations about the current conditions, predictions about efforts to change	Goals, aims, ends, values, purposes, and objectives	Means, plan, strategy, implementation, procedure
Environment as the group perceives it	Outcome desired by the group	The group's behavior

ACTION PLANNING: PLANNING FOR ACTION, ASSIGNING RESPONSIBILITIES, AND COORDINATING WORK GETTING DONE

Source: Mark Millemann

Once the group has made decisions regarding the most desirable solution for accomplishing a goal, the next step, and generally one which frustrates groups, is to develop a list of sequenced action steps which will lead to the accomplishment of the goal. Such a plan should specify who does what and at what time. In developing a timeline for implementation the group might consider some of the following questions:

1. Does the timeline specify a series of sequenced tasks which need to be completed if the goal is to be reached?

2. Does the action plan clearly identify who does what and when?

3. Are all the needed resources for completing each of the specified tasks clearly identified?

4. Does the action plan, when relevant, include times for getting the required authorization from superiors and/or constituents?

5. Does the plan clearly assign responsibilities for carrying out each of the tasks and coordinating the process?

6. Does the plan clearly define the roles of all persons involved?

7. Does the plan provide for evaluation and revision activities at some future date?

In preparing an action plan a group would be wise to follow the following five steps:

Step 1: Brainstorm a list of all the tasks, no matter how obvious or basic they might initially seem, which need to be completed if the goal or major task is to be achieved.

Step 2: Sequence the tasks from things which need to be completed first to final tasks.

Step 3: Using a format like that suggested below, list the sequenced tasks and assign responsibilities for completing each task. This is a good time to identify any additional resources or support a person will need in order to complete his/her assigned task.

Step 4: Next, make reasonable estimates as to how much time each task will take to complete and what would be a realistic target date for completion. As a rule of thumb, avoid going with an optimistic time limit which assumes that everything will go right. Rather, use a time estimate which falls between the most likely and the pessimistic time estimate. Applying such a rule will save a lot of pressure and frustration later.

Step 5: Finally make sure that everyone is clear about what she/he is to do and who is responsible for coordinating the overall plan.

SAMPLE ACTION PLAN

The Objective:

To design, administer and report back the results of a student survey designed to assess students' perceptions of the school climate.

The Work Plan:

TASKS WHICH NEED TO BE COMPLETED	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
1. Inform community about activities and progress of the Community Task Force 1.1 Draft the report. 1.2 Reproduce the report. 1.3 Make arrangements for distribution. 1.4 Distribute to parents.	Jody, Jim & Sara	10/29
2. Get recommendations from Task Force members about possible items to be included in the survey.	Dave, Task Force Members	10/1
3. Get recommendations from staff about possible survey items.	Dave & Steering Committee Members	10/22
4. Design the student survey instruments and strategy	Dave	10/29
5. Review the student survey instruments and process for administering 5.1 Arrange for joint meeting	Joint meeting of Task Force & Steering Committee Patrick & Sara	11/5 – 6:30pm as soon as possible
6. Revise and modify the survey based on the reviews	Dave	11/12
7. Make arrangements for conducting the survey 7.1 Determine sample size. 7.2 Sample student population. 7.3 Finalize schedule for conducting survey. 7.4 Inform staff of schedule. 7.5 Determine any special needs for space. 7.6 Etc.	Patrick & Dave	11/16
8. Conduct the climate audit with students	Dave	11/26-30
9. Tabulate the results.	Jan, Jim, Carol, Patrick, and staff members to be designated with assistance from Dave.	12/3-7

SHARED DECISION MAKING

Source: Mark Millemann

Win-Win versus Win-Lose methods of making decisions and resolving differences.

Win-Win methods are characterized by a willingness to align one's own self interests/purposes with those of diverse others and to negotiate mutually acceptable solutions. Such solutions tend to integrate the essential elements of all parties' preferred solutions.

Win-Lose methods are designed to produce or prevent some outcome against the resistance of another person/party. One pursues one's own self-interests/purposes at the expense of another's.

The importance of disagreement and collaboration

When conflicts and disagreements are openly explored using collaborative techniques, what results are decisions which are:

- of high quality
- creative
- understood
- accepted/owned

Integrative Techniques

1. **Solution shaping** versus people shaping: focusing on how a proposed solution might be modified/amended versus attempting to pressure people into changing their minds about the solution.

2. **Solution requirements**: surfacing what each individual considers to be the essential conditions/requirements which any acceptable solution must meet prior to identifying and evaluating possible solution alternatives.

3. **Achieving a common data base**: getting people who disagree about the reality of a situation to define what kinds of information should be collected from whom in order to establish a "common data base."

4. **Provisional solutions**: getting people who disagree about a solution to agree to try it for a specified period of time and then to evaluate it using an agreed upon set of evaluation criteria.

5. **Transitioning from a "past" to a "future" time perspective**: transitioning persons who disagree about what ought to be the case.

6. **"Purging" either/or solutions and generating multiple solutions**: having groups who are arguing over one or two solution alternatives to "purge"/eliminate those and generate new alternatives.

7. **Focusing on conflicting ideas/proposals vs. conflicting people.**

8. **Providing retreat strategies or "face-saving" strategies**: e.g., asking conflicting parties to first resolve differences outside of the group and then to share their proposed resolution with the entire group.

9. **Minimizing "debating" and the "passive audience" dynamic**: capturing information, maintaining full participation.

TECHNIQUES FOR GENERATING ACCURATE INFORMATION

Source: Mark Millemann

1. **Group survey**

   With reference to a particular focus question, each member of the group is asked to briefly, i.e., using one or two sentences, state his/her current position. It is not a vote, but rather a way of quickly getting out everyone's position on the issue at hand.

2. **Buzz Groups/Dyads or Side Conversations**

   With reference to a particular focus question, members of the group are asked to pair up with one other person and state their positions/ideas. After 2 or 3 minutes, someone is asked to report out to the entire group the key points of what was discussed in the dyads/pairs.

3. **Nominal Grouping Techniques**

   With reference to a particular focus question/topic, members of the group are asked to individually draft a statement, e.g., on a 5 x 8 card, of their position/idea. After 3 to 5 minutes, members are asked to share the statements.

4. **Quantitative Techniques**

   With reference to a particular statement, members of the group are asked to indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement by selecting a position on a continuum which is displayed on a blackboard or piece of newsprint. For example, members could be asked to select a number from 0 to 10, 10 representing total agreement and 0 total disagreement, with reference to a statement such as "group leaders should call on non-participators to get them involved in the discussion." After members have privately decided on a number, the group leader then asks members to share their ranking and displays the data on the continuum.

STAGES OF GROUP GROWTH

Source: Glenn Klein, Leadership Development Specialist, Extension Service, Oregon State University.

Every group has to spend time and energy learning how to work together. Usually some feelings develop between members while folks are learning. It takes time for group members, each different, to learn how each can fit into the group and contribute best. Frequently, things seem "all mixed up," and group members may quite naturally become disturbed and discouraged—even aggravated at each other.

It helps to know that these are natural "growing pains" of democratic groups; that these feelings between members tend to follow a predictable cycle or sequence; and that in most cases, the group will soon become productive and efficient as people work to solve group problems.

Let's take a look at the stages in this developmental process:

1. "Groping" – When we are first finding out how to plan and work together we may not all agree. We don't know and understand each other well enough to really trust the group, and we still have to determine each others' skills, knowledges, situation, and attitudes. So we often feel uncomfortable and "lost."

2. "Griping" – We get discouraged when we can't seem towork together, when there isn't much progress, and our attempts are frustrated. We say wrong things to others, play negative roles, and block group action because we are uncomfortable. This is the place for more "self-other" understanding, to remember that we are all different but we all want to do a good job, and to be liked by others. Maybe we can learn to understand why folks are griping, and learn to give ourselves time to work things out.

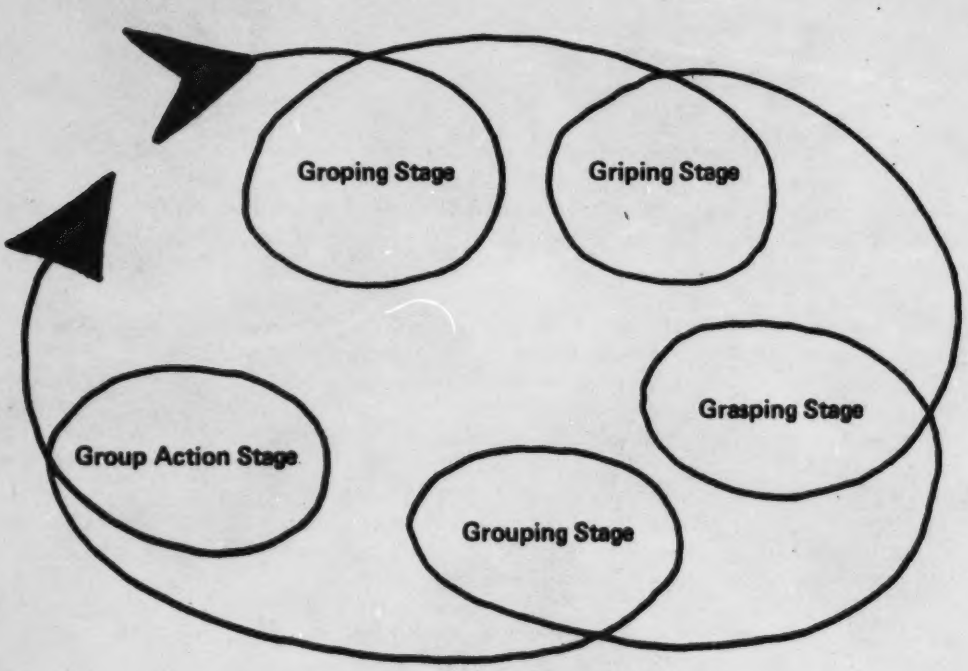
3. "Grasping" – Now ideas and suggestions are beginning to fit. We begin to agree on questions, and can start to see some direction to group activity. Everyone begins to feel more comfortable now that we are getting somewhere.

4. "Grouping" – We are really getting to know each other, and can understand and enjoy how each one works and fits into the tasks to be done. Group tasks, building and maintenance roles come into play, and a surge of enthusiasm spreads through the group.

5. "Group Action" – Now the group is in full swing, with members playing constructive roles, the leadership is shared, and everyone is participating. It was difficult at first, but worth it to learn to work well together, and feel this a good group to work with. We are busy making our group more democratic.

It is important to remember that this may be a recurring experience in any group. A group may work very successfully in the completion of one project and then find itself back at the "groping" stage when it begins a new activity. The same regression may occur when the prople in a group change. A smoothly running group may be disrupted and have to retrace the stages of group growth when new people are added or "old timers" are missing.

The following is a picture of the feeling stages that people experience as they work at problems they all want to solve. Although pictured as separate steps, there will be considerable overlapping as a group moves from one stage to another.



As one job is completed and another comes along, we can still expect to go through some of the early stages, but each time it can be less disturbing and the group becomes more effective.

It is important that we recognize how we feel about each other in the many groups to which we belong, to know that these feelings are natural whenever we really tackle important jobs, and to realize that each group can move ahead toward better relations between members. As we get to know each better, the group gradually becomes our group because we have shared plans and work, and have tried to practice ways of behaving which are cooperative, considerate, friendly–democratic.

Understanding that the "stages of group growth" is a normal process may not make your job as a leader easier, but it should ease some of the frustrations you may feel as a leader or member of a group.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE GROUP

Source: Adapted from *Research Utilizing Problem Solving,"* Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, OR.

1. **Members do not ignore seriously intended contributions.**

   People need to know the effect of their remarks if they are to improve the way they participate in the group. When others do not respond, the speaker cannot know whether:
   a. they did not understand the remark
   b. they understood it and agreed with it
   c. they understood it but disagreed with it
   d. they understood it but thought it was irrelevent.

2. **Members check to make sure they know what a speaker means before they agree or disagree with his or her contribution.**

   Group members should ask "What is it?" before they ask "How do we feel about it?" Group members need to paraphrase, check perceptions, and summarize discussions to clarify their assumptions of what others are saying and feeling.

3. **Each member speaks only for himself and lets others speak for themselves.**

   Each member states reactions as his or her own and does not attribute them to others or give the impression of speaking for others. Each member reports his or her own reactions honestly, so the group can take them into account.

4. **All contributions are viewed as belonging to the group, to be used or not as the group decides.**

   A member who makes a suggestion does not have to defend it. Instead, all accept responsibility for evaluating it as the joint property of the group.

5. **All members participate but in different and complementary ways.**

   While some members work primarily on tasks, others work on improving interpersonal relations. While some members are providing information, others are making sure it is understood and organized, or identifying points of agreement or disagreement. However, each member does not always participate in the same way. Depending on his or her interest in the task, and on the behavior of the other group members, a member fulfills whatever function is appropriate and necessary.

6. **Whenever the group senses it is having trouble getting work done, it tries to find the reason.**

   Some symptoms of difficulty are excessive hair-splitting, repeating points over and over, failing to consider suggestions, holding private conversations, letting two or three people dominate the discussion, taking sides and refusing to compromise, attacking ideas before they are completely expressed, and participating apathetically. When such symptoms occur, the group needs to shift from working on the task to discussing its own interpersonal processes.

7. **The group makes decisions openly rather than by default.**

When a group faces an issue, its members must make a decision. They may agree openly to take action or to take no action. On the other hand, they may decide by default to take no action. Deciding by default has the same impact as openly agreeing not to act, but decisions by default are regarded by group members as failures and create tensions among them. A group grows more by openly agreeing not to act than by not acting because they could not agree.

In a productive group, people view each decision as a trial which can be carried out, evaluated, and revised in light of experience. They know that each decision need not be everything-or-nothing and need not last forever. When this kind of group makes a decision which it does not carry out, its members recognize that they really decided not to act. The group openly discusses why the apparent and real decision were the same. They try to learn why some members agreed with the decision, although they felt no personal commitment to carry it out.

An effective group makes decisions in different ways depending on the kind of issue and the importance of the outcome. The group may vote, delegate the decision to a special sub-group, flip a coin, or require complete consensus. The crucial factor is that the group agree on the way to make each decision.

8. **The group brings conflict into the open and deals with it.**

The members recognize that conflict is inevitable and that they can decide whether to discuss it openly or disguise it.

9. **The group looks upon behavior which hinders its work as happening because the group allows, or even wants, it; not just as the result of having a "problem member."**

A person who continually introduces irrelevancies can change the topic only if other members follow that person's lead. Instead of labeling the person as the problem, the group considers it a group problem. They determine why they all let it happen. Perhaps the other members welcome these digressions as a way of avoiding the open conflict which would occur if they stayed on the topic.

Likewise, the person who talks too much, jokes too much, continually attacks others, or never participates, is a problem shared by the total group. The group needs to discuss "our problem" openly to eliminate the disruption.

The group gives helpful information to individuals about the impact ov their actions on the group. It does not, however, analyze, dissect, and work these people over.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE GROUP OPERATION

Source: Conrad Powell, *Improving Communications Within the Council*, School Advisory Council Activity Guides, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, 1979.

I. BARRIERS TO CONSTRUCTIVE GROUP COMMUNICATION

All groups and councils potentially have barriers which might limit members in communicating effectively with one another and from making good group decisions. Some individuals feel somewhat hesitant about participating in all areas and at all levels of discussion and others may not hesitate to participate, in fact, many may attempt to dominate every discussion and believe that their opinion is the only good opinion. Both of these types of behavior can be barriers to constructive group communication. Some of the potential barriers follow.

Feelings of Personal Inadequacy

People may differ in the degree to which they possess such feelings, but it is probably true that everyone has some feelings of inadequacy. Some may feel inadequate only in certain groups. For example, a parent in a group of professional educators. Others may feel a general sense of inadequacy in almost all groups, or in all interpersonal relationships.

Fear of Evaluation or Rejection

A person who is overly sensitive to the evaluations of other group members and is threatened by the possibility of being rejected by them can hardly be an effective participant in a group. Much of what he/she has to offer that is unique and creative will be held back in fear of negative evaluations by others.

Reactions to Authority

Many group members are caught up in the endless and utterly fruitless task of discovering and identifying with the "correct" authority. From childhood on, the individual is seldom given the opportunity to learn to trust his own personal experiences in life. On the contrary, he is forever placed in situations where he/she is provided with ready-made rules or regulations or even "antique experiences." ("We have always done it this way.")

There are two basic reactions to authority: 1) conformity and submission, and/or 2) hostility. Both are probably present to some degree in each of us and reflect a basic feeling of conflict toward authority. Group members are either overconforming to authority, or overreacting against it. The submissive and dependent group members submerges his uniqueness in order to conform to others; the hostile and reactive group member offers nothing of himself, but merely opposes and tears down the contributions of others.

Self-Centered Participation

Some group members use the group situation to satisfy highly individual needs which are unrelated to, or in conflict with, the needs of other members. A person like this tries to dominate the discussion and may only be satisfied when the decisions reflect his/her point of view. However, it may be that this person is not even aware that he/she is doing this. One of the most difficult things for a group member to learn is how to achieve the delicate balance between satisfying his/her own needs and helping others to satisfy theirs. Those who successfully find this balance are the ones who ultimately contribute the most to the group's development.

Limited Face-to-Face Contacts

If the council meets infrequently it may be difficult to develop a trusting working relationship within the council. Effective communications requires a situation in which there is ample opportunity for group members to check whether they are understanding each other and to work through misunderstandings that may arise in interpersonal relationships.

"Putting Down" Members

In many groups effective communication between members is hampered by the attitude that no one except the "leader" can possibly make a worthwhile contribution to the group. Effective communication between group members is seriously limited, and often nonexistent, whenever group members are more concerned with who says something rather than what is said. Once a member is "put down" or ridiculed they will probably either never participate in the discussion again or do the same thing to someone else.

The Tendency of the Individual to Defend His Ideas

In the process of communicating our own opinions and ideas we often make the other person defend his/her opinions and ideas all the more vigorously. We can make another person state his position more conclusively and defend it more tenaciously, simply by confronting him/her with an opposing position. Most people are willing to defend their point of view against the threat of change. This basic tendency to resist change in the event of pressure is a real barrier to effective communication within a group.

II. WAYS TO OVERCOME BARRIERS

The Use of a Group Leader

One possible way to improve communications within the council is to initiate the role of a group leader. The group leader selected:

- must have respect for the opinions of group members.
- must believe in group process.
- must be willing to live with the group process result.

Most councils will find it necessary to elect a group leader or chairperson to conduct the council meetings. In addition, there may be instances that require the council to break into smaller groups, task forces, or subcommittees; these smaller groups will also need a leader or facilitator to keep the discussion open and on-task. The chairperson/facilitator's role requires that she/he:

1. Clarify the charge (task) to the group.
   a. Each person must be allowed time to fully understand the task.
   b. The group members must understand the extent of their responsibility and the use to which their "product" will be put.

2. Decide who will record for the group.
   a. To whom will the report go? For what purpose?
   b. Who will be responsible?
   c. What will be the form?

3. Help establish procedures for reaching decisions, whether by:
   a. Consensus (discuss until all agree)
   b. Vote (majority wins)
   c. Informal means

4. Help the group stay "on task," using techniques that include
   a. Listening
   b. Questioning (open-ended)
   c. Supporting (eye contact, signs of approval)
   d. Clarifying
      "Do you mean . . .?"
      "Let me see if I understand what you are saying."
      "Let's make this point clear."
   e. Summarizing
      "Now let's review where we're at."
   f. Referring (to the task)
      "Are we agreed?"
      "Are we ready for the question?"
      "Could we have a motion?"
      "How does that relate to the subject?"
   g. Drawing out silent members
      "Let's hear from each member on this point."
   h. Containing members who monopolize.

The facilitator makes it clear to the group that she/he will not make any decisions for the group and resists all attempts by the group to be given that responsibility. The facilitator is, however, responsible for promoting positive group interaction and cohesiveness. These strategies may include:

- identification of group members.
- identification of involvement purposes and expectations of individual members.

Understanding Informal Group Roles

It is important that councils not solely rely on the Principal or Chairperson to perform all leadership roles.

In any group situation many roles are played by the group members. Some are formal and designated, e.g., Principal, Chairperson, Recorder or Secretary. Others are informal and occur naturally, some of which are helpful to the group and some of which are not helpful. For example, every group needs members who can assume **informal leadership roles** such as helping the group set direction and stay on task, clarifying the problem, and involving all members in the discussion. Likewise, groups or councils often have members who occasionally plan informal negative roles. These roles hinder the process of the goup, and include monopolizing discussions or getting discussions sidetracked.

A council needs to understand and be aware of the basic roles that people often play in a group–helping and hindering–and learn how to promote the positive roles and limit the negative ones.

INFORMAL GROUP ROLES

Group Helping Roles

INITIATING: proposing tasks, goals, or actions, defining group problems, suggesting a procedure.

INFORMING: offering facts, giving expression of feeling, giving an opinion.

CLARIFYING: interpreting ideas or suggestions, defining terms, clarifying issues before group, asking for further facts, opinions or feelings.

SUMMARIZING: pulling together related ideas, restating suggestions, offering a decision or conclusion for a group to consider.

ENCOURAGING: being friendly, warm and responsibe to others, indicating by facial expression or remark the acceptance of others' contributions.

COMPROMISING: admitting error, modifying position in the interest of group growth or cohesion, offering a compromise when own idea or status is involved in a conflict.

GATE KEEPING: facilitating the participation of others, suggesting procedures that permit sharing remarks, helping to keep channels of communication open.

GIVING FEEDBACK: telling others, in helpful ways, of how their behavior affects him and the group process.

CONSENSUS TESTING: asking if the group is near a decision, sending up a trial balloon to test a possible conclusion.

Group Hindering Roles

AGGRESSION: deflating other's status, attacking the group or its values, joking in a barbed or semiconcealed way.

BLOCKING: disagreeing and opposing beyond "reason," stubbornly resisting the group's wish based on personally oriented reasons. Using hidden agenda to thwart the movement of a group.

DOMINATING: asserting authority or superiority to manipulate the group or certain members, interrupting contributions of others, controlling by means of flattery or other forms of patronizing behavior.

OUT-OF-FIELD BEHAVIOR: making a display in "playboy" fashion of one's lack of involvement, "abandoning" the group while remaining physically with it, seeking recognition in ways not relevant to group task.

AVOIDANCE BEHAVIOR: pursuing special interests not related to task. Staying off subject to avoid commitment. Preventing group controversy.

MONOPOLIZING: using more than a fair share of discussion time. Not allowing members who are not quite as aggressive to contribute.

ACTIVITY NO. 1

In order to understand informal group roles more clearly, briefly engage in one of the following activities. After the discussion, review and discuss the helping and hindering roles and give one or two examples of each.

- Every member of the council secretly selects one of the helping or hindering roles to play in a situation that will be fun for all. Make up your own situation or use one like this:

The teachers of one grade level in the school want to take their students on a field trip to the State Fair during a school day. At an advisory council meeting, one of the parent representatives brings up the proposed field trip and reports that the parents in her/his community think that such an excursion is a big waste of students' time and taxpayers' money! The principal agrees to act on the recommendation of the council.

Decide this issue in 10-15 minutes. Everyone on your council will play two roles—one as a parent, teacher, student, or principal and the second in the secret leadership or hindering role. Remember, role playing is most successful when everyone "plays" someone least like her or himself.

After you reach a decision, or your time is up, try to identify the secret roles played by everyone. Discuss those roles and their impact. How did the different roles affect the council's ability to make a group decision?

III. PROCESSING

It is helpful for groups to stop work on tasks periodically in order to "process" the way the group functions; that is, examine the way members of the group relate to and communicate with each other. In general, questions like "Are we satisfied with the way the group functions?" and "What are individual members doing that is helpful, and "What are members doing that is not helpful in getting the group to accomplish its tasks?" might be discussed.

A more formal and specific means of analyzing the process of the group involves using the following questionnaire. It normally would be used at the end of a meeting, and can be done in 10-15 minutes. Individual members complete the questionnaire, and then discuss the items in terms of their rating, paying particular attention to items which got particularly high or particularly low ratings. Another use of the questionnaire involves tallying and averaging the responses on each item. Again, discussion might focus on items with high and low average scores.

GROUP PROCESS CHECKLIST

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Group expectation and procedures were clear.	1	2	3	4	5
2. An agenda was agreed upon and written.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Tasks for the group were clearly stated.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The group stayed with the task without wandering into other topics.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The group was able to make decisions when appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
6. When decisions required further actions, actions were clarified and assignments made.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Everyone was involved in the discussion.	1	2	3	4	5
8. No person or persons monopolized the discussion.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Decisions were recorded.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Individual group members were listened to.	1	2	3	4	5
11. The group's roles were basically positive rather than negative.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Leadership moved from one person to another as appropriate; no one kept the leadership role throughout the entire meeting.	1	2	3	4	5

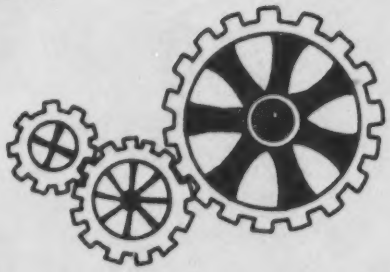
ACTIVITY NO. 2

Complete the questionnaire at the conclusion of your second or third meeting. Discuss the results. Make specific plans for changing any problem areas agreed upon by the group.

You should now be well on your way to improving communication within your council. Remember that your role as an advisory council member is most important and requires your full interest and cooperation if you are to be effective.

DECISION MAKING

Source: Susan Paddock, Greg Druian, and Susan Sayers, *Process Facilitation Manual for Community Education Coordinators*, Northwest Community Education Development Center, Eugene, Oregon and Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C., 1979.



Since a Council forms in order to help solve community problems, it is regularly involved in decision-making. Indeed, good decision-making is critical in problem solving.

There is no one or "right" way to make decisions, however. Some decision-making styles are better suited to certain groups or certain kinds of decisions than are others. A Council needs to be aware of the decision-making styles it uses in order to determine if those styles are appropriate and efficient, or even if certain styles exist of which they are not aware. Self-authorization, for example, may be a common way of making decisions in one group; yet, when members examine their decision making, they may be surprised that self-authorization is a dominant style, and may seek to develop other modes within the group.

Eight types of decision making have been identified, although some of the types are not direct decision-making methods at all, but rather decision making by default. These types are described below.

Unanimity occurs when everyone agrees with a particular decision. It requires no discussion or debate, but happens when Council members, from the moment an issue is raised, agree on what must be done. Unanimity does not happen very often when decisions of any importance are being made.

Consensus happens when everyone in a group agrees that he or she can "live with" a decision. The words "live with" are important. Council members need not agree that the decision is the best decision but only that it is the best possible one for the present. A consensus may be difficult to achieve and difficult to maintain.

Majority Support is the most common decision-making style in our country. It is also satisfying to most people, probably because it is the style they have become most accustomed to. Majority support happens when at least 51% (or, in some cases, 67%) of present members vote in a particular way. When this happens it is assumed that the minority will recognize the right of the majority and go along with the decision. The majority can find itself in trouble, however, if it ignores the minority, especially if the majority is only a slim one or if the minority is a vocal one. Majority decision making must be careful to avoid the tyranny of the majority.

Sometimes a minority controls decision making. This is called **minority support** and happens when a minority in the group is quite vocal and other members either tacitly agree or do not openly disagree with the minority's view. In this case the minority should be aware of the majority, much as a majority should be aware of a minority.

A related style of decision making is the **handclasp**. In the handclasp one or two members are active in supporting a decision, and by various means convince the rest of the Council to go along with their point of view. The **handclasp** differs from **minority support** in that the former appears to be active effort on the part of the minority to involve the majority in decision making and to gain their support. The decision-making style presents difficulties when the members originally responsible for the decision are no longer present and/or effective in the Council.

Still another minority decision-making style is **self-authorization**. This style resembles minority support except that only one person, rather than several, is responsible for initiating action on a decision. As with minority support, other Council members either tacitly agree or do not openly disagree with the decision. This style is subject to the weaknesses of both minority support and handclasp: the silent majority may later become disgruntled with the decision in which they did not actively participate, and may become disillusioned with group decision making; or the single leader may leave the group, so that no one remains who is actively committed to the decision and concomitant action.

There are two styles of decision making which are actually decision making by default, or non-decision making. The first of these is the **topic jump**, when discussion moves to a new subject before an explicit decision has been made on a previous topic. Essentially, then, the Council decides not to make a decision on the first topic, although this decision is never explicit. Similarly, a decision to make no decision happens with a **plop**—when one person raises an issue but the Council does not respond to that issue and moves on to another topic. Both styles of non-decision making pose problems if Council members are not aware that they are taking place and that, further, the issues probably have not been resolved and will reappear in the Council's life.

The first step in improving decision making is to become aware of the styles of decision making that seem to be controlling action. One way of developing this awareness is for one member, or an outside observer, to use a checklist, like the one following, at several meetings. The Council can use this information as baseline data, noting not only which styles are used, but whether certain kinds of decisions are linked with certain styles. It can then determine whether it is satisfied with decision making as it naturally occurs, or whether the Council wants to take steps to modify its decision-making process.

DECISION-MAKING PROCEDURES CHECKLIST

Purpose: To chart the pattern of decision making used by a group.

Procedure: The process observer or another group member tallies the number of times during the meeting that the group uses each kind of decision making. All decisions are included, whether for selecting topics, appointing a recorder, accepting/rejecting a task force report, or closing discussion. Data are fed back to the group as part of the process observation report.

Tally	Kind of Decision Making
_____	Unanimity – everyone agrees.
_____	Consensus – everyone agrees, with possible reservations, at least for a specified time period.
_____	Majority support – the majority of people agrees, often demonstrated by voting.
_____	Minority support – a minority of people agree, with tacit agreement or lack of open disagreement by the remaining members.
_____	Handclasp – one or two members actively support and lead group to action.
_____	Topic jump – the topic shifts before an explicit decision is reached.
_____	Self-authorization – one person initiates action, with implicit consent or no overt disagreement of other members.
_____	Plop – one person initiates action, but the group does not respond one way or another; by default, no action is taken.

DECISION-MAKING GUIDELINES

Advisory committee members should establish guidelines for effective and consistent decision-making to improve the quality and acceptance of decisions. These guidelines might include:

- Determining and making explicit what, if any, non-negotiable decision requirements exist.
- Selecting the most appropriate decision-making style for the situation.
- Gathering complete, factual information about the problem and alternative solutions.
- Involving the appropriate persons or groups in appropriate decision-making capacities.
- Anticipating the impact of a decision on others within and outside the organization.
- Communicating the decision in a clear and concise fashion to the appropriate people or groups.
- Providing formal opportunities for feedback about the decision (e.g., its quality, the decision-making process, and the process by which the decision was communicated).

COMMUNICATION

Source: Susan Paddock, Greg Druian, and Susan Sayers, *Process Facilitation Manual for Community Education Coordinators*, Northwest Community Education Development Center, Eugene, Oregon, and Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C., 1979.

The basis of all group work is communication, and for a group to operate effectively it needs to attend to its communication skills.

Communication Skills

Sometimes the work of a Council does not progress well because different members hold different understandings of a task. Two individuals may find that they do not work well together because they simply don't hear each other correctly or are uncomfortable stating preferences.

Communication plays a very important part in relationships. The following four skills, if attended to, can bring about clearer communication. They are: (1) paraphrasing, (2) behavior description, (3) description of feelings, and (4) perception checking.

- **Paraphrasing**

  Paraphrasing is making sure you understand the ideas, information, and suggestions of others.

  To check your understanding, state the other's idea in your own words or give an example that shows what you think he was talking about.

  Examples: "Is this . . . (statement) . . . an accurate understanding of your idea?"

  "Would this be an example of the point you made?" . . . (then stating a specific example.)

  A good paraphrase is usually more specific than the original statement was.

  Example: Sam: "Joe is unfit to be a manager."

  Paraphrase A: "You think he's not right for his job;"
  (Too general. If Sam agrees with it, you will still not know what he means by "unfit." You have merely the illusion of understanding.)

  Paraphrase B: "You mean that Joe is dishonest?"
  (Specific. Sam might answer. "No. Joe's honest but he doesn't plan and forgets details." Thus this paraphrase leads to a clarification of the way Sam is using the word "unfit.")

  You can sometimes get some clarification by asking "What do you mean?" or by saying, "I don't understand." However, you get sharper clarity when you paraphrase, because you show what your present understanding is and thus enable the other person to address his/her clarification to the specific misunderstanding you have revealed.

  Before you agree or disagree with a remark you should make sure that the remark you are responding to is really the message the other is sending. Paraphrase is one way of testing this.

- **Behavior Description**

Behavior description means reporting specific, observable actions of others without (1) placing a value on them as right or wrong, bad or good, or (2) making accusations or generalizations about the other's motives, attitudes, or personality traits. For example, you might say, "Bill, you have been late to our meetings the last three times." Not, "Bill, you sure are disorganized—you're always late!"

You try to let others know to what behavior you are responding by describing it clearly enough and specifically enough that others know what you observed. To do this you must describe visible evidence—actions that are open to anybody's observation. Sometimes, for practice, it is helpful to try beginning your description with "I see that . . ." or "I noticed that . . ." or "I heard you say . . ." to remind yourself that you are trying to describe specific actions.

Examples: "Jim, you've talked more than others on this topic. Several times you cut others off before they had finished."

NOT: "Jim, you're too rude!" which names a trait and gives no evidence.

NOT: "Jim, you always want to hog the center of attention!" which imputes an undesirable motive or intention.

"Bob, you've taken the opposite of nearly everything Harry has suggested today."

NOT: "Bob, you're just trying to show Harry up," which is an accusation of undesirable motivation.

NOT: "Bob, you're being stubborn," which is name-calling.

"Bob, earlier today when I was worried about whether I could perform well, you told me about a thing you saw me do that you thought I did competently; that made me feel much better."

NOT: "Bob, you're really a nice guy!" This tells Bob you like him, but it merely puts him in a category and does not tell him what you liked about his action.

NOT: "Bob, you go out of your way to say comforting things to people." This imputes a particular motive to Bob. But his intention may have been primarily to help you keep in contact with evidence and with the perceptions of the rest of the group, and only secondarily to be comforting.

"Sam, you cut in before I had finished."

NOT: "Sam, you deliberately didn't let me finish." The word "deliberately" implies that Sam knowingly and intentionally cut you off. All that anybody can observe is that he did cut in before you had finished.

To develop skill in describing behavior you must sharpen your observation of what actually did occur. You must force yourself to pay attention to what is observable and to hold inferences in abeyance. As you practice this you may find that many of your conclusions about others are based less on observable evidence than on your own feelings of affection, insecurity, irritation, jealousy, or fear. For example, accusations that attribute undesirable motives to another are usually expressions of the speaker's negative feelings toward the other and not descriptions at all.

- **Description of Feelings**

Although we usually try to describe our ideas clearly and accurately, we often do not try to describe our feelings clearly. Feelings get expressed in many different ways, but we do not usually attempt to identify the feeling itself.

One way to describe a feeling is to identify or name it. "I feel angry. I feel embarrassed. I feel comfortable with you." However, we do not have enough names or labels to encompass the broad range of human emotions, and so we invent other ways to describe our feelings, such as the use of similes. "I feel like a tiny frog in a huge pond." A girl, whose friendly overture had just been rebuffed, said, "I feel like I have just had an arm amputated."

A third way to describe a feeling is to report what kind of action the feeling urges you to do. "I feel like hugging and hugging you. I'd like to slap you. I wish I could walk off and leave you."

In addition, many figures of speech serve as descriptions of feeling. "I just swallowed a bushel of spring sunshine."

In describing your feelings, you try to make clear what feelings you are experiencing by identifying them. The statement must (1) refer to "I," "me," or "my," and (2) specify some kind of feeling by name, simile, action urge, or other figure of speech.

The following examples attempt to illustrate the difference between expressions of feeling and descriptions of feelings. Notice that any expression of feeling may represent quite different descriptions of feeling.

Expressions of Feeling	Descriptions of Feeling
Person blushes and says nothing.	"I feel embarrassed." "I feel pleased." "I feel annoyed."
Person suddenly becomes silent in the midst of a conversation.	"I feel angry." "I'm worried about this." "I feel like I've been slapped."
"She's a wonderful person."	"I enjoy her sense of humor." "I respect her abilities." "I love her but I feel I shouldn't say so."
"Shut up!"	"I hurt too much to hear any more." "I feel angry at myself." "I'm angry with you."
"You shouldn't have brought me such an expensive gift!"	"I really like your gift." "I feel obligated to you and resent it." "I feel inferior to you when I think of the cheap present I gave you."

The aim in describing your own feelings is to start a dialogue that will improve your relationship with the other. After all, others need to know how you feel if they are to take your feelings into account. Negative feelings are indicator signals that something may be going wrong in a relationship with another person. To ignore negative feelings is like ignoring a warning light that indicates that an electrical circuit is overloaded. Negative feelings are a signal that the two of you need to check for misunderstandings and faulty communication.

After discussing how each of you sees the situation or your relationship, you may discover that your feelings resulted from false perceptions of the situation and of his/her motives. In this case, your feelings would probably change. However, the other may discover that his/her actions are arousing feelings in you that he/she wasn't aware of–feelings that others beside you might experience in response to his/her behavior– and he/she may change.

In short, describing your feelings should not be an effort to coerce the other into changing so that you won't feel as you do. Rather you report your inner state as just one more piece of information that is necessary if the two of you are to understand and improve your relationship.

- **Perception Checking**

In perception checking, you describe what you perceive to be the other's inner state in order to check whether you do understand what he/she feels. That is, you test to see that you have decoded his/her expressions of feeling accurately. You transform his/her expressions of feeling into a tentative description of his/her feeling. A good perception check conveys his/her message, "I want to understand your feelings–is this (making a description of his feelings) the way you feel?"

Examples: "I get the impression you are angry with me. Are you?"

NOT: 'Why are you so angry with me?" This is mind reading, not perception checking.

"Am I right that you feel disappointed that nobody commented on your suggestion?"

"I'm not sure whether your expression means that my comment hurt your feelings, irritated you, or confused you."

Note that a perception check (1) describes the other's feelings, and (2) does not express disapproval or approval. It merely conveys, "This is how I understand your feelings. Am I accurate?"

Practicing the four communication skills described above can be invaluable in helping a group to function more effectively. As Coordinator, you may want to set aside time during some Council meetings to work on the skills. A ten-minute role play using one of the skills, for example, may be an effective way to begin a meeting.

In addition, any process observation of Council or committee meetings should deal with how well Council members used communication skills.

Listening Skills

Communication skills are closely linked with listening skills. Indeed, paraphrasing and perception checking depend on using listening skills. Thus, you might choose to concentrate on listening skills with your Council as a way of approaching communication skills.

Here are some ways to listen to others and make sure they listen to you.

- **Listening to Others**

Try to understand what others are saying.
Ask them to repeat what they've said.
Ask them to clarify their remarks.
Tell others what you have heard. (Paraphrase)
Make sure that others feel you have understood them.
Use these skills regularly, so that they become habits.

- **Being Heard**

  Use words that other people can understand.
  Speak directly and to the point.
  Find out what others think you said.
  Offer to clarify.
  Check to see that others understand you correctly.
  Use these skills consistently.

Process observation should also be concerned with the listening skills of Council or committee members.

Feedback

The skills of listening and communication are important not only in Council meetings but in everyone's daily life. Practicing and observing them is therefore vital to both individual and group function. This happens most easily in an environment where people develop a sense of trust and openness toward one another; hence it may take some time before Council or group members feel comfortable enough with one another to participate in communication skill training. As Coordinator you can begin to develop this sense of trust by modeling the use of communication and listening skills. You can also develop this trust by regularly using feedback.

Feedback is a way of giving and receiving help. Feedback is the element of communications that focuses on how to change behavior. It provides information about how others are affected by a person's or group's behavior.

How to effectively give and receive feedback can be learned by studying and practicing some guidelines. Here's an example using a committee meeting situation:

> At a regular meeting a citizen's committee is discussing how to get people out to vote in the upcoming election. John Jones, chairman, has dominated the meeting thus far, and the other members are getting uncomfortable. John, sensing the discomfort, says, "How come no one else seems to be offering any suggestions?"
>
> Mary Smith, a committee member, replies, "John, when we were probing ways to get senior citizens to the polls, I felt ignored and forced to accept your suggestions."
>
> John responds, "You mean to say that I've been dominating the meeting so far and not listening to anyone else?"
>
> The other members nod their heads in agreement.

Below are listed several guidelines for useful feedback.

- **It is specific, not general.**

  Mary gave John a specific point in the discussion, "when we were probing ways to get senior citizens to the polls," which provided John an example to reflect on. Mary could have said, "you haven't been listening to anything we've said," but that might have put John on the defensive.

- **It is solicited, rather than imposed.**

  Although Mary and the other members felt uncomfortable, John opened up the discussion with his question, "How come no one else seems to be offering suggestions?"

- **It is well timed.**

  Mary felt John's question was asking for feedback.

- **It emphasizes the individual act, rather than the total person.**

  Mary might have just called John a domineering person who wanted to take control of the meeting. Mary would be talking in terms of John's personality traits, which are difficult, if not impossible, to change. Focusing on behavior implies that it is something related to a specific situation that might be changed. It is less threatening to a person to hear comments about behavior than "traits."

Feedback usually involves a person-to-person or person-to-group exchange. However, the term also refers to obtaining a Council's collective opinion of a project.

Feedback can be helpful to group leaders, and councils. Some ways to obtain feedback are as follows:

- In role playing situation, the group leader "models" ways to give and receive feedback. This modeling can take place during the first group session. In doing this, it is important to negotiate the level of openness expected in interpersonal relationships. In addition, the leader's assumptions about the group's readiness for increased openness should be continuously tested. Openness and trust develop gradually, so it is important not to overload Council members at the outset with unexpected effusions of feelings.

- Toward the end of a session, the leader encourages the Council to review its performance. Then a community member decides on a method of providing feedback and prepares feedback for the end of the next session.

- The leader appoints someone to monitor the session. This person keeps the group's attention focused on its task, reminds its members of the time they are spending on issues, and suggests ways to improve the next meeting.

- The leader develops a checklist of appropriate performance behaviors to be used by the Council at the end of a session.

You may want to develop a role-playing situation which focuses on feedback, in order to provide a new Council with a non-threatening way of experimenting when using feedback.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Source: Susan Paddock, Greg Druian, and Susan Sayers, *Process Facilitation Manual for Community Education Coordinators*, Northwest Community Education Development Center, Eugene, Oregon, and Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C., 1979.

In working with others in solving community problems conflict is almost inevitable. Indeed, it is rare for community members to agree completely on values, beliefs, and priorities. At one time group leaders were taught how to avoid conflict in their groups or, should conflict be unavoidable, how to resolve that conflict. Now we realize that conflict is a predictable, and therefore natural, stage in group development. Conflict can be useful since it can lead to the surfacing and solution of problems. However, even beneficial conflict must be managed or it can become harmful. This brief section, then, is intended to help you to identify conflict styles in your Council and to begin to develop ways to manage conflict.

Conflict Styles

Group conflicts may not always be identifiable. A fist fight or shouting match are easily identified as conflict situations, for example, but a Council's functioning may be much more influenced by the quiet member who only complains outside of meetings or by the forceful community leader who coerces all others in the group to do things his or her way.

One approach to conflict management is a problem-solving approach.

Recognizing that it is legitimate to have conflicts is the first step in creating an environment where people can deal with conflict using a problem-solving approach.

Focus on the Problem

In focusing on a problem, it is necessary to surface conflict, or bring it out in the open. Each party explains his or her position and perception of the effect of the opposing position. The source of the conflict is determined.

Search for Alternatives

Searching for alternatives involves examining ways to resolve the conflict. What are the basic needs of each individual in the conflict? What is most important? What can be given up? Are there any solutions that would be acceptable to all concerned? What method would best resolve the problem?

- **Consensus**

  Consensus is a shared agreement among group members, each of whom is willing to go along with a decision without sabotaging it.

- **Majority Vote**

  This is a win/lose situation; the majority gets its preference and the minority does not.

- **Negotiation**

  When a solution is negotiated, two or more parties discuss and trade off different wants, desires, and demands until they reach a final agreement.

No one approach works for every situation. Majority vote is the most expedient; however, the danger in using it to resolve problems is that the minority group may decide to split off from the main group. Negotiation or trading off may resolve some conflicts only temporarily. Coming to consensus takes a long time and may not be worth the effort for a minor decision. For more information on decision making by consensus, see the resource paper, "Decision Making."

Plan for Action

When an approach has been agreed upon, planning for action firms up agreements. What has actually been decided, and how will it be carried out? Will a date be set for assessing the results?

Carry Out the Plan

The decision is put into practice.

Assess the Results

Finally, the decision is reviewed: How is the resolution working? How is the problem-solving approach to conflict management working? What could be done differently?

Some conflict situations may take a long time to work through, while others, momentary misunderstandings, may be resolved in a few minutes. However, in either case, for a group to remain an effective working body, it needs to recognize four things:

- Conflicts do occur and are legitimate.
- Individuals and groups may differ without one party being entirely right or entirely wrong.
- Conflict rarely goes away by itself. By recognizing and surfacing the conflict, participants have a greater chance of resolving issues.
- Conflict is manageable and can be dealt with.

Problem solving, however, is not the only way to deal with a conflict situation.Sometimes a negotiating approach is more appropriate, as described in the following exercise.

This exercise can be used by two people who have a disagreement or conflict. It may be helpful to have a third person present to facilitate discussions. For this exercise to work, both parties must wish to have some sort of resolution to the situation.

Procedure

Person A completes a sequence of four statements from his or her point of view:

- Description of the current situation.

  Examples: The conflict I'm having with you is . . .
  The disagreement I have with you is . . .
  The problem as I see it is . . .

- Description of the ideal situation.

  Examples: The way I'd like the situation to be is . . .
  What I'd like to see is . . .

- Description of the current feeling.

  Example: The way I feel about the situation is . . .

- Description of self-intention.

  Example: What I'm willing to do to create what I want is . . .

Person B then paraphrases what Person A has said. If the paraphrase is accurate, Person B then moves through the same sequence, and Person A paraphrases.

Person A then asks, "Do we have a resolution?" If the answer is "no," Person A begins the sequence again. If the answer is "yes," both parties review their agreements.

Alternate Procedure

This exercise may be modified for groups in conflict by having representatives engage in the exercise and seek confirmation from their own groups as to whether the conflict is resolved.

These few paragraphs on conflict management are really only an overview of the area. The more you learn about power and influence in a group, behavioral styles, and decision-making methods, the better able you will be to assess and deal with conflict as it arises.

Further information and activities relating to conflict situations are:

Richard Schmuck, Philip Runkel et al, *Handbook of Organizational Development in Schools.* Palo Alto: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1972.

Handbooks of Structural Experiences for Human Relations Training, Vol. 1-6. La Jolla: University Associates, 1969-1977.

SOLUTION REQUIREMENTS

Traditional problem solving processes involve the following five steps: (1) defining the problem, (2) searching for possible solutions, (3) evaluating alternative solutions, and selecting a final one, (4) formulating an action plan and putting it into operation, and (5) evaluating the product and process.

Too often this problem-solving process results in a "win-lose" rather than a "win-win" outcome. Whenever the "search for possible solutions" follows immediately after the step of "defining the problem," the stage is set for a win-lose struggle. Each person who proposes a solution has his or her ego firmly attached to that solution. Once proposed, an idea is hard to abandon. The group, then, is faced with a list of different solutions each "owned" by a different individual or group of people.

This picture changes drastically when we insert an important step between the definition of the problem and the search for solutions. This step is the listing of essential and desirable conditions. An essential condition is a requirement that one or more group members feel that a solution must meet for it to be acceptable. Desirable conditions are those that members of the group would like to have a solution meet but that they are willing to forego if necessary. The essential conditions should be listed separately from the desirable conditions.

In listing the essential conditions, each member should be encouraged by the group, and especially by persons with whom the member disagrees, to express his or her conditions freely and fully. Animosity is decreased when conflicting parties demonstrate that they are sincere in wanting to hear the conditions that their opponents believe are essential to meet their particular needs. This contributes to a cooperative rather than an antagonistic climate; it is more likely to make a solution acceptable to all. Sufficient time should be taken in listing the essential conditions to be sure that all members have an opportunity to express their desires.

Every member's essential conditions must be accepted without questions. If they are challenged, a win-lose confrontation over the list itself could result. Only after all of the essential conditions are elicited can there be an examination of them to determine which are truly essential and which are merely desirable.

PROBLEM-SOLVING MEETINGS

When dealing with inter-personal conflicts or problems, one approach for resolving them is called the Problem-Solving Meeting or PSM. A problem-solving meeting involves the following steps: (1) stating the problem, (2) defining key words, (3) receiving background information, (4) identifying the meeting's objective, (5) listing the starting question, and (6) writing the action questions (how to move from a general discussion to specific solutions).

This approach to resolving problems can be used by clearly answering these points prior to the meeting. One helpful way to do this is by writing the information on butcher paper. Once the meeting begins, review and modify the six points with the other person to make certain there is clarity and agreement on the problem and objective. Next, walk through the agenda point by point until agreement is reached on how to resolve the problem.

Source: Mark Millemann

THE PROBLEM-SOLVING MEETING: PROCESS AND FORMAT

I. Planning for the problem-solving meeting (PSM)

- ..... The problem statement
- ..... The key words
- ..... The facts and affects
- ..... The meeting objective(s)
- ..... The starting question *(if causes unkown)*
- ..... The action question *(if causes known)*

II. Critiquing and revising the plan for the PSM

III. Conducting the problem-solving meeting

- ..... Conducting the problem-solving meeting
- ..... Developing action plans
- ..... Reviewing action plans and evaluating the PSM

IV. Checking on implementation of the action plans

AN EXAMPLE OF A PLAN FOR A PROBLEM-SOLVING MEETING

The Problem Statement:

Students in the third and fourth grades who are expected to be reading at or above grade level, are not achieving current reading objectives in both comprehension and vocabulary.

Key Words:

Expected: expectations are based on nationally named and district criterion referenced tests

Achieving: achievement levels determined by most recent administration of district's criterion reference tests; the desired score of 80% proficiency was not met by target group of students

Students: 45% of total population

Current reading objectives: as specified in district's curriculum guidelines for elementary grades

Facts and Affects:

- 45% of all third and fourth grade students didn't meet proficiency level on latest tests
- the number of parent complaints about reading program have been steadily increasing since October
- only 13% of the same students did not have proficiency levels as second graders
- a trend seems to exist, i.e., while 28% of the third graders are not achieving as expected, 62% of the fourth graders are not
- both teachers and adminsitrators are feeling a great deal of pressure from parents and members of the school board

Meeting Objective:

To identify the major *(two or three)* causes of the problem

Starting Question:

What are some of the reasons you think 45% of third and fourth graders are not achieving desired levels in reading comprehension and vocabulary?

STOP SESSION

Source: Mark Millemann

General Description: The leader intervenes and stops the action of the group for a short period of time for the group to focus on its process of working together and on ways to improve it. The group then goes back to working on whatever action it was engaged in previous to being stopped.

Purpose: This procedure is suggested as a way to learn the distinction between process and content work of a problem-solving group, and to use this knowledge to enhance and facilitate the work of the group as it moves toward achievement of its objective.

Recommended Group Size: Not to exceed 20.

Materials Required: No special materials required.

Time Needed: One to fifteen minutes.

Specific Procedure:

1. The leader intervenes and stops the action of the group at a time when she/he determines that it may be most useful to focus on the group's process of working together.

2. The leader points out some process in the group's working together which needs some attention (e.g., decision-making, conflict, support-giving, communication, etc.). The leader leads the group in an analysis of the situation.

4. Each individual in the group derives from the discussion implications for changes in himself/herself or for the group as a whole.

5. The group returns to its previous work prior to the stop session, and attempts to implement process changes to improve its work.

Variations in Procedure:

1. Process evaluation instruments may be prepared beforehand for participants to focus on in the stop session.

2. Stop sessions are frequently used at the end of meetings just before departing. However, implications for changes must then wait until the next meeting, since the group does not return immediately to its work previous to the stop session.

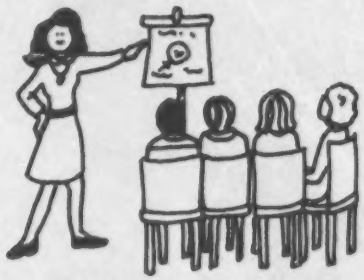
Cautions:

Do not allow stop sessions to go on for too long. There is a natural tendency for groups to become so involved in the discussion of how they are working together that they resist moving back to the task prior to the stop session.

Also caution should be used to discuss only those process issues which most directly impact the accomplishment of the task.

Write down exact words of the contributor unless it is too long. Then write down a shorter statement and modify until contributor agrees with it.

HOW TO DO BRAINSTORMING WITH A GROUP



Source: Unknown.

Brainstorming is a handy method for helping a group to tap its own resources in a short period of time. A few basic ideas help to keep brainstorming sessions productive and rewarding to the participants. Group leaders have suggested the following ground rules for this activity:

- Make the topic clear: write it on something–blackboard, flip chart, newsprint–that is large enough so everyone can read it.
- Write down all suggestions on something the group can see–one idea promotes others.
- Write down all suggestions immediately–do not screen or sort them. Write down "silly" as well as "serious" contributions.
- Write down exact words of the contributor unless it is too long. Then write down a shorter statement and modify until contributor agrees with it.
- Move rapidly from one item to the next–do not discuss the value, reality or other merit of an idea.
- Any discussion must be brief and for clarification of the meaning rather than the worth of an idea.
- Keep things moving as rapidly as possible to encourage freewheeling and new ideas as well as carefully considered ones.
- Get everybody's ideas in–survey the whole group for contributions rather than only a few vocal persons.
- Have more than one person to assist the activity, if possible–a "spotter" or solicitor of ideas, and one or more recorders. For very rapid listening, two sheets of paper or two blackboards with two records can be used alternately.
- Set either a time limit or a maximum number of items before you begin. Five minutes may be enough. Ten often is plenty.
- Help the group to understand that they will prioritize or sort and evaluate the ideas after the brainstorming is completed.

DEVELOPING GROUP AGREEMENTS

Source: Mark Millemann

I. Introduction

In meetings, a member often feels that others present are evaluating him or her. Such persons, therefore, feel they must conform to everybody else's expectations or suffer the consequences (rejecting, punishment, etc.).

It is difficult to be creative, take risks, or practice new desirable behaviors unless such behaviors are overtly or explicitly encouraged. It is also difficult to deal openly and honestly with interpersonal feelings in an undefined or negative environment.

Meetings can arouse feelings of boredom, frustration, and anger. If group members attend to such feelings when they arrive, the group can change the conditions that produce them and thus cause a more productive and satisfying climate for getting the job at hand done.

One direct and simple way to deal with nonproductive environments, such as those suggested above, is for the working group to formalize an agreement on the kinds of norms they want to work under.

II. Suggested procedure

1. Each member states a norm or custom he would like others to practice as a regular part of the work group's manner of operating.

2. The group discusses the proposed norm until it reaches consensus. The behavioral content of the agreement upon the norm is precisely described and recorded for future reference.

3. Group agreements will be promptly published for individual distribution and placed as a poster in the meeting. (To stimulate the discussion, members could think through the following two questions, preferably in writing:

   a. What have I wanted to do in this group but have not done because it seemed inappropriate?

   b. What have I done in this group that I didn't want to do but could not say no to?)

III. Examples of group agreement

1. **Directness**: If I am not satisfied where the group is going, I will report my reactions directly to the group itself when it is in session. If outside a regular meeting another member tells me he is dissatisfied with the group, I will suggest that he bring the matter up to the total group at the next regular meeting.

2. **Survey**: Any member may ask for a survey at any time. The requesting member states what he wants to know from the total group. Another member then paraphrases or clarifies the topic until all are clear what they are being asked. Each person, in turn, briefly states his current position on the topic in two or three sentences *(a survey is not a vote)*. This process does not bind the members or the group. A survey must be taken at the time it is requested –it suspends all other activities.

IV. Group agreement review

Members should periodically request a review of agreements to see if they are being kept. An effective group may feel the need to redefine or change prior agreements and plan action to build commitment for new agreements.

SOME CONCEPTS OF LEADERSHIP

Source: Glenn Klein, Leadership Development Specialist, Extension Service, Oregon State University.

What is leadership? In simplest terms, leadership is the activity of helping others achieve or work toward common goals or purposes.

Today the expert in leadership is the one who best knows how to release the creative talents of those with whom he works. In earlier years, the expert in leadership was considered to be the one who best knew the answers. New terminology has changed from "directing and controlling" to "involving and motivating."

Leadership may be regarded as a series of functions that builds and maintains the group and gets the job done. Examples of these leadership functions are: helping the group feel comfortable and at ease (looking after physical setting, acquaintanceship, etc.), helping to set and clearly define objectives, and cooperatively working toward these objectives.

Leadership myths. In earlier years it was assumed that leaders possessed certain special traits or characteristics. Many studies were made in an effort to correlate the leadership capacity or potential of an individual with these personal attributes. While some definable personal characteristics have been linked to leaders in certain situations, these studies haven't been successful in providing a formula for leadership selection. The modern concept is that leadership is functional or "job centered." We should ask then, "what does an effective leader do," rather than "what kind of a person will be a good leader."

We have often heard the statement, "he is a natural born leader." We know now that a leader in one situation may have very little leadership ability in another. A guide on a mountain cimbing expedition might not be a very effective school board chairman.

The art and science of leadership. The ability to work effectively with groups in a leadership role can be enhanced through conscientious effort, study and practice.

It may truthfully be said that leadership is both an art and a science. The scientific principles are learnable. Therefore, any of us may do a better job of leadership if we understand and conscientiously practice some of these scientific principles.

The art of leadership is the way in which we apply leadership principles. We know that there is variation among us in the manner in which we carry on any activity. This is apparent in such every day activities as playing a musical instrument, training a horse, cooking a meal or even fishing. In each of these activities as in leadership, learning and practicing certain principles will help but it must be recognized that people vary in the degree to which they approach perfection. Students of human relationships have identified many functions of skills that are based on sound leadership principles.

Skills of leadership. The following are some of the skills that are important to learn and to practice.

Skills of personal behavior. The effective leader:

a. Is sensitive to feelings of the group.
b. Identifies self with needs of the group.
c. Learns to listen attentively.
d. Refrains from criticizing or ridiculing members' suggestions.
e. Helps each member feel important and needed.
f. Is not argumentative.

Skill of communication. The effective leader:
a. Makes sure that everyone understands not only what is needed but why it is needed.
b. Makes good communication with his group a routine part of his/her job.

Skills in equality. The effective leader recognizes that:
a. Everyone is important. Everyone needs recognition.
b. Leadership is to be shared and is not a monopoly.
c. A leader grows when leadership functions are dispersed.

Skill of organization. The effective leader helps the group:
a. Develop long range and short range objectives.
b. Break big problems into small ones.
c. Share opportunities and responsibilities.
d. Plan, act, follow up, and evaluate.

Types of leadership. Three types of leaders are commonly identified.

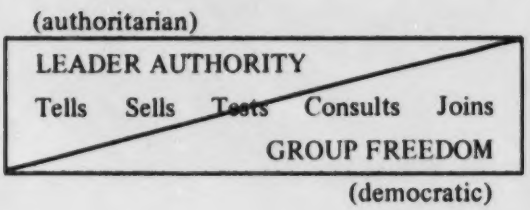
Autocratic leader. This leader is one who tells others what they may or may not do.

Laissez faire leader. This is a setting in which everyone is free to do as he/she pleases.

Democratic leader. In this situation the leader functions with the group. Members are encouraged to participate, to discuss and to help make decisions.

The following is an analysis of these three types of leadership:

TYPE	DISADVANTAGES	ADVANTAGES
AUTOCRATIC		
Does most things	More hostility	More production while leader watches
Manipulates others	More dependence	Quicker decisions
Gets own way	More apathy	
Pushes group	Slower execution	
LAISSEZ FAIRE		
Does nothing	Less satisfaction	No work for leader
Ignores others	Less production	Frustration may force others into leadership roles
Lets each go own way	Poorer quality of work	
Just sits	Less personal growth	
	Job falls back on someone or isn't completed	
DEMOCRATIC		
Does something, not everything	Slower decision	More individual responsibility
Helps group get its way	Less initial production	More friendliness
Pulls with group		Better implementation
Respects others		More personal growth
		More motivation
		Greater ulitimate production



In any group there is a specific relationship between leader authority and group freedom. This relationship is based on the situation, the leader's performance, the expectations of the group, or a combination of the three. A change in any one or more of these three factors will change this leader-group relationship. For example: A new relationship may be a consequence of group activity or it may result when a leader practices new skills.

The left side of the illustration represents **authoritarian** leadership. The diagonal line and the central continuum (line) from left to right represents progression toward democratic leadership. For example in an authoritarian leadership situation, the leader "tells" the group what is to be done, how the job is to be done, and when it will be done. When the leader relinquishes some of his/her authority, he/she may try to "sell" the group on a job. As he/she releases more authority he/she may indicate what is to be done and ask if there are objections.

In a fully democratic situation, the leader and group jointly analyze the problem and decide together on a course of action.

It is recognized that there is no absolute formula for democratic leadership. There are many times when the situation requires some "telling." On the other hand, optimum group freedom will usually produce greatest results in the long run.

The objective–sharing the leadership. The appointed or "duly elected" leaders such as the chairman, president, boss or manager may exhibit autocratic, democratic, or "laissez faire" leadership. Some appointed or elected leaders feel that position of leadership entitles them to exhibit autocratic leadership–others strive toward democratic leadership but find that it often takes longer to get things done.

The shared leadership is the ideal and it can only develop in a democratic leadership situation. Some of the values of shared leadership are:

- Pools the skills and abilities of the entire group.
- Promotes a spirit of unity – "my group" feeling.
- Each member feels a greater responsibility for group maintenance and task.
- Members are more interested – have a "stake" in goals and objectives that they help establish.
- Contributes to the growth and development of both members and leaders.
- Promotes a greater feeling of satisfaction as each group member shares in common achievements.

The shared leadership concept requires:

- Clearly defined goals and objectives as identified and agreed on by the group.
- Freedom of group members from fear of criticism or ridicule.
- A warm friendly atmosphere – "permissive" as opposed to "directive."
- A setting where group members are socially at ease and physically comfortable.

GROUP LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

Source: Glenn Klein, Leadership Development Specialist,
Extension Service, Oregon State University.

Effective leadership is essential if groups are to achieve their objectives. The following is a list of suggestions for group leaders, committee chairmen, discussion leaders, etc., which may serve as guidelines for more effective group leadership and development. The guidelines suggest a pattern of operation for the chairman before, during, and after a meeting.

Before the Meeting

Meeting notices: Be sure all members know where and when the meeting is to take place. Also the purpose of meeting should be clear.

Physical arrangements: To insure proper environment and atmosphere the following items should be considered in advance:

A. **Room size** – It is large enough to accomodate the group? Too large a room may also be unsatisfactory.

B. **Seating** – Provide convenient seating for the group. Small groups function better if members can see one another and are able to talk directly to other members of the group. Example: being seated in a circle or around a square table would be favorable to seating in rows of chairs in schoolroom fashion.

C. **Lighting** – Adequate.

D. **Heat** – Adequate heat and good ventilation to maintain a comfortable room setting and atmosphere.

E. **Name tags** – Not knowing an individual's name is a barrier to communication. Name tags, place cards, or name tripods help encourage informality. If members know one another well this may not be necessary.

F. **Refreshments** – During a break or after the meeting, refreshments help members stay alert and offer an opportunity for informal visiting. People are more apt to enjoy a meeting that offers a change of atmosphere every 45 minutes or so. Remember, however, everyone is not a coffee drinker so be sure to have some tea or punch, etc., on hand if refreshments are served.

Agenda: An agenda provides members a guideline of what is expected to be accomplished and the sequence of events. While an agenda provides some structure to a meeting, it should be flexible so that group action is not stifled by its structure.

Confirm assignments: The chairman should confirm committee assignments prior to the meeting. Follow-up may not only remind a member of a forgotten chore but will encourage him by his knowing that his job is important and that the chairman is there to help if needed. The chairman should also confirm resource people, material, facilities, etc.

Know fellow group members: One way to develop a good working relationship with members of your group is to know each member individually. This helps each member feel a sense of importance in the total group.

During the Meeting

Friendly atmosphere: The chairman should greet members as they come, make introductions where necessary, and help establish an informal and friendly atmosphere.

Start on time: Be courteous enough to those who have arrived on time by starting on time. If a meeting is to start at 8 p.m. then start at 8 p.m. If your group gains a reputation for starting and ending on time, group members will soon learn what is expected of them. If you continually start late, don't be annoyed by late comers, they know you aren't planning to start on time.

Review agenda: Be sure members know the purpose of the meeting. If possible, have the agenda on flip chart, blackboard or hand-out material.

Encourage informality: Small groups function better in an informal atmosphere. Raising one's hand to ask for the floor, referring to the group leader as "Mister Chairman" or following strict parliamentary law is stifling to a small group. Members should have the opportunity to speak freely and not be confined by formality.

Summarize occasionally: The chairman should summarize discussion from time to time to bring loose ends together. It may be necessary to have the secretary or recorder review if some points are not clear.

"Yes" or "No" answers: Phrase questions so that you do not get a "yes" or "no" answer. Instead of saying "Do you agree," say "What is your opinion," or "How do you feel about this?"

Compliment member contributions: Be conscious of those in your group who seem more timid than others. When they offer suggestions or comments, compliment them or recognize their efforts so they will be encouraged to participate further. Try to involve the non-talker by appealing to him in areas where you know he has confidence.

Review accomplishments: When it seems appropriate, review accomplishments so that loose ends are drawn together. Help the group see that it is successful. Summarize so that all members understand how far the group has gone in relation to what was set out to be accomplished. Be as fair and accurate in summary as possible. Always close with a summary. (This may be done by the recorder or secretary.)

Decide on next step: The group should decide on "Where they will go from here." The chairman, by helping the group see what "the next step is," can insure continued interest on the part of the group. Too often groups reach a plateau and lose interest due to confusion or misunderstanding as to what further goals need to be or may be accomplished.

Who will do what: Be certain that each person knows and understands what his or her responsibility is so that there is no confusion as to who is to do what. It is important that the group know the individual responsibilities as well as the person involved.

End on time: It is as important to end a meeting on time as it is to start on time. If your meetings gain the reputation of being punctual on "both ends," your group will function more efficiently due to "time limits" not to mention the fact that people are more apt to attend if they know the meeting will be over at a decent hour.

After the Meeting

Check with recorder or secretary: Notes should be checked with the recorder or secretary to insure that both the chairman and secretary are in accord. The recorder may have some questions on certain points that you may be able to help clarify.

Leave facilities in order: This entry is self explanatory. Sometimes this responsibility is left to the leader or chairman alone. Try to encourage the group to see that this is a group responsibility. If the group is large you may need a clean-up committee. If your group gains a reputation for being "messy" you may find it difficult to find space for future meetings.

Evaluate: Following a meeting the chairman should review what was accomplished in light of what the group set out to do. Oftentimes we lose sight of where we are going by not looking back to see where we have been.

Minutes: If possible, send out minutes to all members–not just those who attended, but to all members of the group, committee, etc., who were to have met. A good way to lose members is not keep them informed as to what took place at the meeting. People would sometimes rather stay away from a meeting than to feel embarrassed by not knowing what is "happenning."

Check on missing members: The chairman should follow-up on missing members to inform them of what took place at the meeting and outline what is to follow. This helps members feel they are important to the group. Remember, it is easier to miss a meeting for the second consecutive time than to return not knowing what has happened.

Personal contact: The chairman should "follow-up" on committee assignments and individual responsibilities of his or her group. This lets committee members know you are there to help them–to answer questions or provide encouragement. This is not cracking the whip but merely being available to help when needed or gently urging, encouraging, or reminding forgotten or lagging assignments.

DELEGATING RESPONSIBILITY

Source: Glenn Klein, Leadership Development Specialist, Extension Service, Oregon State University.

The delegating of responsibility is both helpful and desirable in all kinds of organizations–volunteer, professional, civic, youth–in business, in government, in churches and in families. It helps to maintain good human relations and provides for more efficient operation. Delegating involves more than just giving someone else a job. It takes planning and skill to achieve group objectives utilizing the total talent in a group.

When delegating a responsibility remember to:

- Select a person capable of carrying out the assignment. If the capabilities of a person are not known, involve him first in limited responsibilities that provide experience and the opportunity to succeed. It is desirable from time to time to share responsibility with different members and to best utilize their talents. This helps to motivate greater membership participation and more effective group action.

- Be sure that the person, whether he is a member of an organization or an employee, knows what you expect. Good communications are very important. Speak clearly and concisely. What is said may have different meanings to different people. The way it is said often affects the meaning to another. Did he understand what you meant?

- If possible, involve such persons in the planning of what is to be done. Such involvement aids in communication, allows the person or persons being given responsibility to offer suggestions and develops team action.

- A periodic conference can help a great deal and should be operated as democratically as the conditions will allow. This is expecially important for officers of an organization. Getting together to discuss plans and exchange ideas regarding assignments can avoid misunderstandings and also aid team action.

- Commend and encourage those involved from time to time. A pat on the back can do much to bolster a person's confidence and stimulates new effort.

- Let people carry out their assignment without interference. There are usually several ways of doing things; do not be upset if it is not done exactly as you would do it. However, check to see if anyone has questions or needs additional help. This also provides an opportunity to see how things are going.

- Thank people for their assistance when the job is completed. A word of appreciation is always in order.

Delegating responsibility can improve relationships and expedite group action as it:

- helps to develop a team approach.
- provides an opportunity for training for others.
- involves others in a decision-making role.
- improves understanding and communications.
- removes some of the pressures from the person primarily responsible.
- makes it possible for others to carry on if the person in charge cannot be present.
- improves support of the organization; the business of the project.
- brings in new ideas.
- helps get the job done.

Thus, by delegating responsibility, the effectiveness of an organization can be increased; the membership becomes more involved, the abilities of members are developed, and talents of members supplement each other.

In this way we promote and develop individual growth, experience more effective group action and motivate membership participation.

A few don'ts that should be remembered when delegating responsibility include:

- Don't hesitate to ask people to assume responsibility because:

  You can do it quicker yourself rather than to try and get someone else to do it. They will be able to do it faster the next time.

  Your past experience in asking for assistance has been disappointing. This time may be fine.

  You hate to ask someone else to do it. They may want to do it.

- Don't assign people to tasks without discussing the assignment with them and getting their acceptance.

- Don't elect people to offices or assign them to committees unless they have indicated a willingness to assume the responsibility.

- Don't assume that people given an assignment know what is expected. Review it with them.

- Don't expect success with every delegation of responsibility.

Remember

An organization leader, a businessman or a parent must be considerate and must communicate effectively if the delegating of responsibilities is to be really successful.

The involvement of others, particularly those who may be asked to assume specific responsibilities in the planning of the action to be taken, is very important.

The delegating and sharing of responsibilities encourages personal development and enhances group effectiveness.

GROUP MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Source: Glenn Klein, Leadership Development Specialist,
Extension Service, Oregon State University.

Leadership is a shared responsibility. Members have certain obligations and responsibilities in addition to the rights and privileges they share as part of a group. The following is a list of suggestions for group members which may serve as guidelines for more effective group membership and participation. The guidelines suggest a pattern of operation for group members before, during, and after a meeting.

Before the Meeting

Be prepared: As a committee or group member it is your responsibility to prepare ahead for the meeting. If you have a definite committee job or responsibility, be sure to take care of your assignment. Remember, you are an integral part of the group and the success of the group is dependent upon the activity of each member. If you have no specific assignment then be sure you are familiar with the goals and purposes of the organization or committee. You will add more to the discussion if you know what the aims of the group are. By being informed you are in a better position to stimulate action that may help solve problems or contribute to the success of the organization.

During the Meeting

Be on time: Be sure to arrive on time so that the meeting proceeds orderly or so that your late entrance does not disturb the progress of the meeting. It is annoying to the group to have people straggling in after the meeting has started. Also, it is not fair to those who have been punctual to delay a meeting, waiting for late comers. Remember, the sooner the meeting starts the sooner the business at hand can be finished.

Speak Freely: The success of a discussion depends on the participation of all. The discussion meeting is yours–a chance to voice your opinions. Each member's ideas count so don't hold back. The strength of a group is that the collective thoughts of all members are of more value than single ideas or dominance of a few.

Be a good listener: Sometimes we become so tied up in what we are going to say that we may miss important parts of the discussion. Try hard to get the other man's point of view. Remember: On almost every question there are three points of view–yours, the other guy's and the right one.

Be informal: Waiting to be recognized by the chairman before speaking helps maintain order in an auditorium full of people–but for small groups the formality of raising your hand or standing up to speak only hinders the group. Don't stand up to speak or necessarily wait to be recognized. A discussion meeting is not the place for formal speeches. Informality is the rule. If several people begin to speak at one time, then the chairman may offer the floor to one or the other.

Give others an opportunity: While informality is the rule, don't monopolize the discussion. Don't speak for more than a minute or so at a time–less preferably. Give others a chance. Make your point in a few words, then allow someone else to voice their views.

If you get lost: If you lose the train of thought of the discussion don't be afraid to ask questions. Other people may also be lost or confused and you are doing the group a service by asking for clarification.

Disagree but don't be disagreeable: When you find you are on the opposing side from the general discussion, say so and tell why. But disagree in a friendly manner. Everyone is after the truth and a friendly discussion of opposing views adds interest to any meeting.

Strike while the idea is hot: Many good ideas are lost standing on formality. If several want to speak at once, it is the chairman's job to grant the floor to one, giving others a chance later. The ideal discussion not being directed toward the leader or any other individual. Discussion should be directed to all members.

Come with questions in mind: Make note of questions and points of disagreement that occur to you during preparation for the meeting. Raise these questions during discussion. Remember, although you may not have a specific responsibility or job to fulfill, merely being a member of the group gives you the responsibility to be well informed on the subject matter at hand. Newspapers, magazines, lectures, public forums, radio, etc., are good sources for clippings and notes to be used at discussion meetings.

After the Meeting

Evaluate the results: The success of a committee or discussion group may depend on its ability to evaluate itself–to be self-critical, constructively. As a group as well as individually, members should evaluate the accomplishments of the discussion in view of what the group set out to do. What went wrong? What were the strong points of the discussion? Was there a need for more facts and information? How might we gain by this experience? Offer suggestions to the chairman on how the group could improve. Don't criticize the chairman or leader behind his back. The leader is interested in the group and would like to hear your ideas or constructive criticism.

Do your homework: If you have been given a responsibility, fulfill it. The group is depending on your commitment just as you depend on the group to fulfill your individual needs.

PROBLEM MEMBERS

Source: Glenn Klein, Leadership Development Specialist, Extension Service, Oregon State University.

Understanding the reasons people behave as they do in group situations is of major importance for both group and individual growth and success. However, it often happens that certain types of behavior must be dealt with before there is time to know people well enough to understand basic reasons and work on more permanent solutions. In such situations, one must operate as best one can with the limited information that is available. This may mean using techniques found successful in past situations, hunches, suggestions from others and good old common sense.

Your first objective should be to provide an opportunity for the individual to contribute to the group. If all attempts to make the individual productive fail, you may have to resort to techniques which give you greater control of the group. The situation will help determine which has greater priority, group success or complete individual freedom. Here are some ideas to try with different types of members who are problems in group situations.

Problem Personality – The Scrapper (His/her comments appear argumentative; he/she seems to enjoy a good scrap.)

A. Possible reasons for his/her behavior:

1. He/she is less mature or less intelligent than others.
2. He/she just enjoys a good fight. This is his/her way of establishing leadership.
3. He/she wants recognition.

B. Ideas for how to involve or control him/her:

1. Will the use of soft voices and patient, reasoned statements disarm the scrapper?
2. Is he/she seeking prestige in nonconstructive ways? If so, try to meet this need with appropriate responsibilities.
3. Will it help to preface answers to the scrapper by such remarks as: "I don't blame you for feeling strongly about it because it is very important . . . I see your point . . . Perhaps we could think of several ways of handling this?"
4. Use parliamentary procedure to limit his/her participation.
5. Set time limits on discussions.
6. Enlist groups to help and don't argue with him/her. It's difficult to argue by yourself.

Problem Personality – The Talker (Has a tendency to talk too much.)

A. Possible reasons for his/her behavior:

1. He/she is just trying to be helpful.
2. He/she is scared to death of silence in a group discussion and feels compelled to rush in and fill the gap.
3. He/she really knows more than anyone else about the topic under discussion. (If so, he/she may not be talking too much at all.)
4. He/she just thinks he/she knows more than anyone else.
5. Is it just a habit. (Gift of gab?)
6. He/she feels a need to exert his/her influence on the group in order to seem important.
7. He/she feels very strongly about the subject and becomes emotionally involved.

B. Ideas for how to involve or control him/her:

1. Have someone set an example by not monopolizing the discussion himself/herself.
2. Make him/her aware that he/she is monopolizing time by suggesting that everyone should have an opportunity to express his/her opinion.
3. Express gratitude for his/her contributions in order to make him/her feel important, then ask for ideas from others in the group.
4. Can he/she be helped to feel he/she belongs by calling on his/her "we" feelings by suggesting to the group as a whole, "Now we have heard from Mr. Jones, we want to know just what the rest of you think?"
5. Offer him/her a particular responsibility to help him/her feel important and wanted so he/she need not put all of his/her energies into talking.

Problem Personality – The Quiet One (Participates less than his/her potential warrants.)

A. Possible reasons for his/her behavior:

1. May be scared to talk before a group. May have had a bad experience early in life.
2. May have found that whenever he/she speaks up he/she gets squelched.
3. May have found that whenever he/she speaks up he/she gets appointed to a committee.
4. Maybe he/she is new to the group and feels his/her ideas will not be welcome until he/she has been around longer.
5. May not have an opinion on the topic or does not care one way or the other.

B. Ideas for how to involve him/her:

1. Try to find out in what size group he/she will contribute. Most people operate more comfortably in small committees.
2. Will he/she contribute when asked about his/her speciality?
3. Perhaps he/she is playing it safe and easy. Maybe he/she will begin to contribute if he/she discovers that suggestions are not jumped on as they are being given.
4. Will it help if he/she sees that the jobs are assigned on the basis of interest and ability not because it was his/her idea?
5. He/she might appreciate being asked by the "old timers" how a problem was handled where he/she came from.
6. Learn his/her interests and special experiences through individual contacts rather than embarrass him/her in public.
7. Give him/her support and/or encouragement when he/she participates.
8. Involve him/her in an evaluation of the meeting.

Problem Personality The Happy Wanderer (Does not seem to be able to stick to the point of the discussion.)

A. Possible reasons for his/her behavior:

1. The purpose of the discussion may not be clear.
2. The group shifted to another phase of discussion without a definite statement to that effect.

B. Ideas for how to involve or control him/her:

1. List items on the agenda on a chalk board and check them off as they are finished.
2. Chairman should summarize frequently to remind everyone of where we are and what the ultimate objectives are.
3. Ask for his/her contributions on a certain item; helping him/her to feel at home and part of the group.

USE OF DISTRICT STAFF

Citizen advisory groups can and should rely on school district staff for assistance. The school district employs over 2,300 individuals in different capacities. All staff function in one way or another to help educate the 23,500 students enrolled in Salem Public Schools.

Staff can be divided into two levels: local and district-wide. Local staff include those individuals who work at the elementary or secondary levels. In other words, people who work in elementary, middle or high schools.

Many positions provide assistance to local citizen advisory committees, including:

- principals
- secretaries
- counselors or child development specialists
- social workers
- community school coordinators

These positions, among others, are available to help citizen advisory groups by answering questions, researching issues, helping plan meetings, preparing and distributing materials, and a wealth of other duties. District guidelines indicate that citizen advisory committees are allowed access to budgeted funds for the purpose of obtaining postage and supplies such as paper and envelopes. Arrangements for these items and for production of multiple copies of official documents are to be made with the school principal, within reasonable limits.

At the district-wide level, a variety of staff members are available to assist citizen advisory committees, upon request. The superintendent and the area assistant superintendents are available to respond to questions or concerns of citizen advisory committees. They can be reached by calling them:

Superintendent, Bill Kendrick – 399-3001

Central Area, Assistant Superintendent, Jim Tacchini – 399-3011

North Area, Assistant Superintendent, Homer Kearns – 399-3066

South Area, Assistant Superintendent, Bart Simmons – 399-3098

The Community Relations Department includes several staff members who can assist citizen advisory groups. They include:

Executive Assistant to the Superintendent for Community Relations, Skip Liebertz – 399-3116

Citizen Involvement Coordinator, Greg Hansen – 399-3116

Communications Coordinator, Mary McFarland – 399-3116

Volunteer Services Resource Teacher, 399-3074

These individuals are trained to work with the public, especially citizen advisory committees. They are available to assist groups with planning and conducting meetings, problem-solving, decision-making, communicating, researching problems, training, and a host of other functions. The Department publishes and distributes a monthly newsletter, **The Adviser**, to all citizen advisory committee members. For more information, call 399-3116.

Fiscal Services offers assistance to citizen advisory groups related to the school district's annual budget.

For more information about what local and district-wide services are available to citizen advisory committees, contact Community Relations at 399-3116.

WRITTEN PUBLICATIONS

These publications are available to district employees and patrons through the Community Relations department.

A GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS, San Diego, Calif.: San Diego Center for Community Education, 1976.

ADVISORY COUNCILS FOR EDUCATION, Richard K. Hofstrand and Lloyd J. Phipps, Urbana, Ill.: Rurban Educational Development Laboratory, University of Illinois, 1971.

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT TRAINING PROJECT, Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts, 1978.

"How to Make Citizen Involvement Work. Strategies for Developing Clout," Duane Dale.

"Planning, for a Change. A Citizen's Guide to Creative Planning and Program Development," Duane Dale and Nancy Mitiguy.

"Playing Their Game Our Way. Using the Political Process to Meet Community Needs," Greg Speeter.

"Working Together: A Manual for Helping Groups Work More Effectively," Bob Biagi.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION, PROVEN PRACTICES: CITIZEN PARTICIPATION, William J. Liebertz, Gregory D. Hansen, and David K. Dickson, Salem, Ore.: Salem Public School District 24J. Prepared for the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1980.

CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT, Wayne R. Robbins, San Diego, Calif.: San Diego Center for Community Education.

EVALUATION: THE KEY TO PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS, Greg Hansen and William Liebertz, Salem, Ore.: Salem Public Schools, 1980.

FACTS AND FIGURES: A LAYMAN'S GUIDE TO CONDUCTING SURVEYS, Bill Burges, Boston, Mass.: Institute for Responsive Education, 1976.

FOCUS: SEVEN STEPS TO COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL PROBLEM SOLVING, Larry Winecoff and Conrad Powell, Midland, Mich.: Pendell Publishing Co., 1975.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR CITIZENS IN EDUCATION, Columbia, Md.

"Developing Leadership for Parent/Citizen Groups"

"Collective Bargaining and Teacher Strikes"

"Fund-Raising by Parent/Citizen Groups"

"Parents Organizing to Improve Schools"

"The Rights of Parents in the Education of Their Children"

"Violence in Our Schools"

"Who Controls the Schools?"

NEGOTIATING, San Francisco, Calif.:, California Rural Legal Assistance Senior Citizens' Project, National Council of Senior Citizens, 1979.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO SCHOOL COUNCIL EFFECTIVENESS, Jim Stanton and Ross Zerchykov, Boston, Mass.: Institute for Responsive Education, 1979.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE MADE EASIER, Corvallis, Ore.: Extension Circular No. 947, Cooperative Extension Service, Oregon State University, 1978.

PROCESS FACILITATION MANUAL FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION COORDINATORS, Eugene, Ore.: Northwest Community Education Development Center. Prepared for the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1976.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL ACTIVITY GUIDES, Columbia, S.C.: School Advisory Council Assistance Project, University of South Carolina, 1979.

"Budgeting for Schools," Terry Peterson.

"Clarifying School Advisory Council Roles," Larry Winecoff.

"Communicating with the Community," Clelia D. Hendrix.

"Conducting Opinion Polls," John C. Cone.

"Improving Communications within the Council," Conrad Powell.

"Interpreting and Using Test Results," Mary C. Jackson and Joy E. Sovde.

"Making Group Decisions," Edith W. Jensen.

"Needs Assessment," Lynne E. Cooper.

"Setting Program Goals and Objectives," Carl A. Carpenter.

"Understanding and Assessing School Programs," Mary L. Beach.

THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL: ITS ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION, Everette E. Nance, Midland, Mich.: Community Education How-to Series, Pendell Publishing Co., 1975.

THE 1979 ANNUAL HANDBOOK FOR GROUP FACILITATORS, John E. Jones and J. William Pfeiffer, LaJolla, Calif.: University Associates, Inc., 1979.

SLIDE TAPE PRESENTATIONS

These slide tape presentations are available through the Community Relations Department.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR CITIZENS IN EDUCATION, Columbia, Md.

"Organizing Parents and Developing Leadership"

"How to Work with School Officials."

"Fund-Raising"

"Parent Involvement in Collective Bargaining"

"The Law and Parents' Rights"

SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS SLIDE TAPE, Community Relations Department, 1980.

COMPLAINT POLICY, STUDENTS, PUBLIC, EMPLOYEES

1. **Responsibility for Implementation:**

   1.01 The Superintendent or designee shall have the responsibility and authority for developing, implementing, and administering the complaint procedures. The Salem District School Board supports the resolution of complaints at the lowest level possible. At the point a complaint is referred to an external agency and thereby becomes a grievance, all efforts will be directed toward resolution of the grievance.

2. **Definitions:**

   2.01 A complaint is a concern, a problem, or difficulty related to the educational process of Salem Public Schools filed with the District by a student, employee, or the public.

   2.02 A grievance is a concern, problem, or difficulty related to the educational process of Salem Public Schools which may be resolved by an agency external to the District by a student, employee or the public.

3. **Students:**

   3.01 The Salem School District will implement reasonable and effective means of resolving student complaints to reduce potential areas of grievances, and to establish and maintain recognized channels of communication between students and all school personnel. The ultimate goal is to serve the educational welfare of all students. Each student shall be assured the opportunity for an orderly presentation and review of concerns and complaints.

   3.02 No student shall suffer reprisal as a result of having a complaint investigated and/or acted upon.

4. **Public:**

   4.01 The Salem School District will implement reasonable and effective means of resolving public complaints concerning policies and practices of the School District. These processes are intended to establish and maintain recognized channels of communications between the public, all school personnel, and the District School Board. The ultimate goal is to serve the educational welfare of students. The public will be assured the opportunity for an orderly presentation and review of concerns and complaints.

5. **Employees:**

   5.01 The Salem School District will develop and implement reasonable and effective means of resolving concerns voiced by employees in order to reduce potential areas of complaints and grievances, and to establish and maintain recognized channels of communication between all school personnel. An employee presenting a concern, complaint, or grievance shall be assured the opportunity for an orderly review of the concern, complaint, or grievance without reprisal.

PROCESS FOR RESOLVING PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

1. **Authority**: School Board Policy KN, GAE, JCE

2. **Definitions**:

   2.01 Complaint: A concern, problem, or difficulty related to the educational process of Salem Public Schools filed with the District by a student, employee, or the public.
   2.02 Complainant: Person filing the complaint.
   2.03 Instructional Materials: Materials used by students in the classroom or used in the classroom through the Library Media Center.
   2.04 School Days: Days when school is in session and students are present.

3. **Rationale**: Salem School District policy, federal and state laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, handicap, national origin, race, marital status, religion, sex, or financial ability in instructional programs, extracurricular activities, and employment. The following process is to be used by members of the PUBLIC wishing to file complaints.

4. **Implementation Procedures/Guidelines**

   4.01 Level I.
      4.01.01 Any member of the PUBLIC who feels that he/she has been discriminated against or wishes to express a complaint or concern relating to a program activity, a possible violation of the law, or School District policy is encouraged to discuss the matter with the individual who caused the possible discriminatory act or inappropriate activity, or discuss the matter with the building principal (if not a school location, the supervisor in charge of the location/department.).
      4.01.02 If such a discussion does not resolve the matter or appears to be impractical, the complainant should submit the complaint in writing to the principal (or appropriate supervisor in charge).
         4.01.02.01 Complaint forms are available in school offices, building offices, or the District Administration Center, 1309 Ferry Street SE.
         4.01.02.02 Distribution of a complaint form when completed by a member of the public and delivered to an office of the School District, will be as follows: white copy to the principal, supervisor, or administrator in charge; pink copy to the Superintendent's Office (appropriate administrator/supervisor); yellow copy to be retained by the complainant.
      4.01.03 The written complaint should be filed within 30 school days (or during the summer, 30 calendar days) of the alleged incident or knowledge of that incident, or within 30 calendar days after the complainant has sought resolution at Level I. The written complaint should contain the specific details describing the incident and the desired remedy.
      4.01.04 Within five working days of receipt of the written complaint, the principal (or Supervisor in charge) will respond to the complaint in writing with a copy of the response to the Council level supervisor.
         4.01.04.01 After investigation, the response should propose a resolution or, when appropriate, advise the public patron of the invalidity of the complaint.
      4.01.05 If the nonschool location complaint is not resolved with the administrator in charge of the location, the complainant may continue the process with the administrator's supervisor. The time line for resolution is outlined in Level II.
      4.01.06 Administrative procedure for handling complaints related to curriculum instructional materials is written in the Administrative Rule KNA-R.

4.02 Level II.

4.02.01 If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response, the complainant should then contact the Council level supervisor.

4.02.02 Upon receipt of the complaint, the Council level supervisor will investigate and determine if unlawful discrimination or inappropriate activity has occurred.

4.02.03 Within 30 working days after receipt of the complaint, the Council level supervisor will respond in writing to the complainant. The response, based upon the investigation, shall state whether or not a discriminatory act or inappropriate activity occurred, and what steps might be undertaken to resolve the problem.

4.03 Level III.

4.03.01 If the complainant is not satisfied with the disposition of the complaint at Level II, the complainant must contact the Superintendent in writing that the complaint has not been resolved to the person's satisfaction.

4.03.02 The Superintendent shall review the complaint, and based upon the written appeal and the report of the Council level supervisor, shall determine whether or not to review the case.

4.03.03 If the Superintendent so determines, an informal hearing conducted by the Superintendent or designee will be held within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint. A written record will be kept of such proceedings. Based on the record of the hearing the Superintendent or designee will respond within 15 working days after the hearing.

4.04 Level IV.

4.04.01 If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint by the Superintendent or designee, he/she may appeal the decision to the District School Board within 30 school days (or during the summer, 30 calendar days).

4.05 **Additional Information**

4.05.01 If the complainant is not satisfied with the District School Board's response to a resolution, the complainant may wish to contact another agency; for example, the State Department of Education; the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW); U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D.C.

4.05.02 While the complaint process is being implemented, if the complainant chooses to contact any of the above external agencies, the District will consider the complaint a grievance, and the complaint process will terminate.

GAE-R-E
(Also JCE-R-E, KN-R-E)

COMPLAINT FORM

PERSON FILING COMPLAINT _____ DATE _____ SCHOOL OR ACTIVITY _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____ PHONE NUMBER _____

Type of Complaint: *(Please check appropriate box[es])*

Educational Program or Activity ☐ Employment ☐

Transportation ☐ Instructional Material ☐

In what area of discrimination, if applicable:

Age ☐ Handicap ☐ National Origin ☐

Race ☐ Sex ☐ Religion ☐ Activities ☐

Marital Status ☐ Financial Ability ☐ Parental Status ☐

Specific Complaint:
(Please provide detailed information including names, dates, places, activities, and results of any informal discussion.)

Remedy Requested:

DATE _____ SIGNATURE OF COMPLAINANT _____

DISTRIBUTION:
white — Principal, Supervisor, or Administrator in charge
pink — Superintendent (to be mailed or taken to 1309 Ferry Street SE
canary — Complainant

2/77

PROCESS FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS RELATED TO INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. The following procedure is established specifically for handling complaints related to instructional materials.

   1.01 Any complainant shall be supplied with a standard printed form which must be filled out before consideration may be given to the complaint.

   1.02 Complaint forms are available in school offices, building offices, or the District Administration Center, 1309 Ferry Street SE. The name of the form is: **Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials.** Distribution of the form will be as follows: white copy to the principal, supervisor, or administrator in charge; pink copy to the Superintendent's office (appropriate administrator/supervisor); yellow copy retained by the complainant.

   1.03 Materials subject to the complaint will not be removed from use until after committee study and final action of the District School Board.

   1.04 The Superintendent shall arrange for a Review Committee of nine, consisting of two students, an administrator, two classroom teachers, the Instructional Media Specialist, a School Board member, and two lay persons (one of whom will be a representative of the Title IX and/or Affirmative Action Advisory Committee, when appropriate). The District Instructional Media Specialist shall serve as secretary and without a vote.

      1.04.01 The two lay persons and the Board member shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Board.

      1.04.02 The Superintendent will appoint the administrator, the students, and the classroom teachers.

   1.05 The committee will meet within five working days after appointment, and will return a written report of its findings to the Superintendent within three calendar weeks of its appointment.

   1.06 The committee shall recommend that the questioned material be:

      1.06.01 Retained without restriction.

      1.06.02 Retained with restriction.

      1.06.03 Removed from use.

   1.07 The Superintendent shall report immediately the recommendation of the Review Committee to the School Board, which shall make a final decision.

   1.08 The decision of the Board shall then be reported to the principal of the school and other professional personnel, as appropriate, and to the complainant.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Fill in information as appropriate.

If Printed, give:

Author _____

Title _____

If audio-visual, give:

Title _____

Type of material _____

Material in this box will be provided by school personnel:

Hardcover _____ Paperback _____

Publisher _____

Copyright Date _____

Producer _____

Distributor _____

Copyright Date _____

Your Name _____

Telephone _____ Address _____

City _____

You represent *(check one)*

- ☐ Yourself only
- ☐ (Name organization) _____
- ☐ (Identify any other group) _____

1. To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific) _____

2. What do you believe might be the result of using this material? _____

3. Did you review the material in its entirety? _____ (read all of the book or see the film and hear the discussions preceding and following the showing?) If not, what part did you review?

4. Are you acquainted with the judgment of this material by professional critics?

5. What would you like your school to do about this material?
   - ☐ Do not use it with my child.
   - ☐ Withdraw it from use with all students, as well as from my child.
   - ☐ Send it back to the selector or selectors for re-evaluation.

6. In its place, what material of quality would you recommend that would be an appropriate substitute in the curriculum subject area involved? _____

DATE

SIGNATURE OF COMPLAINANT

DISTRIBUTION:
white — Principal, Supervisor, or Administrator in charge
pink — Superintendent (to be mailed or taken to 1309 Ferry Street SE
canary — Complainant